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STRATEGY AND EMPIRE

THE decision on strategy which the chiefs of the United Nations took at Washington governs our reading of the news and throws into the due perspective the successes on the world-wide battlefield and the reverses. While we await Mr. Churchill's report on the mission he undertook so wisely and fulfilled so brilliantly, we have to guide us the brief but significant disclosure of Colonel Knox. The first aim of the Grand Alliance is to destroy the military power of its chief enemy, Nazi Germany: everything else is secondary. Measured by that yard-stick the balance of the week's news is on the right side. The Germans are rallying in the Crimea and claim the recapture of Feodosia: but everywhere else on the long front the Russians continue their advance. Their entry into Mojaisk should mean that the German line will soon be pushed back to Smolensk and Kharkov. On the other hand, the check to the Crimea advance is disappointing, since it is success on this sector that would make the German position in Ukraine untenable. From Libya the news is mixed. The capture of Halfaya was a skilful and useful stroke, but the main fact is that large supplies have reached Rommel by sea and that he may be able to make a strong stand in a favourable position at El Ageila. We cannot yet send to these West Mediterranean waters ships and planes enough to complete the isolation of this outpost of the Axis. We have so far quite failed to perform the promise of destroying the Germans in Libya and releasing Britain's army for further battlefields. Finally, at an alarming pace, the Japanese sweep down the peninsula to Singapore: the southern "tongue" of Burma is at their mercy, while in the Philippines General McArthur has been driven to a last stand.

The master-idea adopted at the Washington Conference was sound, but the political difficulties we predicted are only too apparent. The Australian press still writes in a tone of anger and alarm, which reflects the views of Mr. Curtin's Government. The young men from this Dominion are fighting in the jungle to defend Singapore, but where are the planes which should be supporting them in the air? The answer is that most of them are in this island awaiting a nearly possible invasion: others are strung out in the Middle East from Cyrenaica to Irak: others again have gone to Russia. That answer does not satisfy Canberra. While the Australian press protests, the Chinese official Radio speaks in an even angrier tone. China, it says, has had "a raw deal." She sent her only well-armed divisions to defend Burma, but what is our contribution? Worse still, it would seem that she has doubts, which Dr. Goebbels may be feeding, about our loyalty to her in the long-range perspective of this war. She asks whether, when Hitler's power is broken, we really will fight on against Japan, until she recovers her own lost territory? That is implied in any honest reading of the declaration of the United Nations at Washington, but if the Chinese ask for clarification, it should come promptly from London and from Washington in the plainest English.

The Washington strategy is in a military sense correct. But in applying it, we cannot ignore the human factors of our problem, or expect the Australians to be satisfied. The fact is that our entire strategy up to date has been defensive, with our own island and the Suez Canal as its pivots. Even in Libya, where tactically we are attacking, our strategical purpose is the defence of that imperial waterway, and it was the same consideration that carried us into Syria. Our only direct military contribution to the destruction of Hitler's power consists in air raids on German cities which, for excellent reasons, necessarily grow noticeably fewer, with an occasional descent on a Norwegian island.

In the military field, it will be said, we can do no more: we can only give munitions for others to use, as our ancestors gave subsidies. Then let us take another test of our readiness to make sacrifices to the common cause. Japan is a danger to the United Nations, to Americans, Dutch and Chinese, as well as Britons, not merely because she is an efficient military Power, but also because her cry "Asia for the Asiatics" has had some success. It won the people of Thailand: it reduced some Malay princes: it has deceived some Indians who lately had a great following. What have we done to counteract it? Three months ago U Saw, the Premier of Burma, came to London to ask for an assurance that his country shall enjoy Dominion status after the war. He spoke frankly, and warned us in public interviews that his people were inclining towards Japan. Mr. Churchill answered him bluntly and sent him empty away. On the way home he got into touch with the Japanese. To call this man a Quisling as our press is doing, is to invert the facts. On the evidence he is one of the least pro-Japanese of Burman politicians. He appears to be a Burman patriot, who offered on terms to forget that we conquered his country. We rejected his very modest conditions and he has presumably decided to ask whether Japan would do more. What is Britain's title to his "loyalty"? That we drain away the natural riches of his country, teak, tin and oil? We owe the assurance he sought in vain to ourselves, his countrymen and all our allies. What we owe to Burma, we owe in even ampler measure to India. By refusing to free these dependencies, we feed the arsenals of Japan with political fuel as for years we fed them with aviation spirit. Not so can Hitler be destroyed.

A Balkan Union

The conclusion of an agreement for a permanent union between the exiled royal governments of Greece and Jugoslavia would be an event of the first importance, if we could be sure that either of them will represent its people after the war. This union is meant to be the nucleus of a future

Balkan Confederation covering the whole Peninsula. It contemplates a Customs Union, a common economic policy and a joint General Staff with standardised equipment for the armies; but the degree of political union is rudimentary, for it provides no single administrative organs, though it contemplates habitual consultation between ministers over foreign, economic and military policy, with joint meetings of parliamentary delegations which would have no legislative powers. Is the intention to create under British influence a buffer zone between the Soviet Union and Central Europe? That might suit the Greeks, who are sensitive to the pressure of sea-power. But the virile part of the Jugoslav nation, which is still waging an obstinate guerrilla war with an army said to number 100,000 men, is under Russian inspiration and may have other views for the future. If and when Bulgaria and Roumania revolt against the Axis, they also will probably turn towards Russia. On its merits the scheme is only moderately attractive. It would do little to break down the extravagant nationalism of these peoples. Their economic problem, moreover, is not how to trade with one another, but how best to organise their dealings with Central Europe and German industry.

Greece and the Blockade

Greece never feeds her own people. She always imports meat, fats, sugar and about 360,000 tons of wheat a year. From that import the blockade cuts her off completely. The war has devastated her agriculture from one end of the country to the other; last autumn the peasants ate their seed-corn, the last desperate act of farming people. The health officers of the German occupying forces estimate that 500,000 people will die of hunger this winter: this is as if, in Britain, seven million people were doomed to starvation. Not that the Nazis need care; the Greeks have no industries which they can use for war purposes; a hostile seafaring people will be more docile if enfeebled by famine. The death rate from starvation in Athens varies from 450 to 1,000 daily. The Italians and Bulgars are well content; it is easier to colonise depopulated land. Is it possible that Britain can suffer an allied people to perish on account of the punctilio of blockade? It is, of course, useless to appeal to the Ministry of Economic Warfare. Officials are not employed to exercise human imagination. But it is possible to argue with them, for there is a cast-iron case for breaking the blockade for Greece. Feeding the Greeks, if properly supervised by the International Red Cross, will not benefit Germany, for Greece has no stocks to requisition; all she had is gone. The principle could well be established that support given to an occupied country in essential foodstuffs, food for children, vitamins and medicines, through a neutral neighbour, does not constitute a breach of blockade, providing the stocks of the country are exhausted, and the distribution takes place under international supervision. Armed with this safeguard we can, and must, override the blockade for Greece.

Pan-America

The effort to reach unanimity at the Pan-American Conference in Rio de Janeiro has moved slowly. Brazil, which has close trading links with the U.S.A., tried to influence Argentina, which, however, announced that it would remain neutral. Chile for the same reason also stood apart, though it has been alarmed by the threat that Japan may declare war upon it. All the other Republics were agreed on a policy of solidarity with the U.S.A. qualified by non-belligerency. They ask for a breach of diplomatic relations with the Axis Powers by the whole of Latin America. This would render Fifth Column activities difficult, and would also tighten the blockade and facilitate the movements of the American Navy and Air Force. Report now says that all 21 States are breaking with the Axis.

The Home Front. *By an Industrial Correspondent.*

The Economist published last week an extraordinarily interesting article on the prospective output of munitions in the United States. It pointed out that to translate Mr. Roosevelt's figures from dollars into pounds at the official rate of exchange would yield results which simply could not be true—as they would involve an American output of war goods four and a-half times the size of the British output. It went on to say that the output capacity of American industry could be put at approximately two and a-half times the British, and that it had been independently estimated that war goods costing £1 in this country cost approximately eight, and not four, dollars in the United States. It would therefore be more plausible to put the prospective American output of war goods at from twice to two and a-half times our own; and even this would involve a restriction of American consumption at least as great proportionately as what has been brought about in this country. Of course, as the American standard of living, over a large part of the United States, is higher than ours, there is in theory more room for war-time contraction; but it does not at all follow that this contraction will be brought about easily or at once. It would in fact be most unwise—here I am not quoting *The Economist*, but speaking for myself—to take even the scaled-down figures of prospective American output as by any means assured. It remains to be seen how heavily the American people is prepared to tax itself in the new situation, as well as how effective the new measures of price control are likely to be. Failing the most drastic measures in both these fields, there is bound to be a sharp rise in prices which will upset all conclusions based on the magnitude of the financial appropriations of which the President spoke. It should, moreover, be noted that already there is a bill in Congress which is aimed at maintaining the purchasing power to the agricultural population unimpaired despite war conditions. The President has threatened to veto this; but evidently the main struggle over the restriction of American consuming power is still to come.

* * *

The expansion of British Restaurants is now being seriously held up by the hostility of the private caterers, who regard it as unfair competition when such a restaurant serves a meal to any member of the ordinary public. The caterers' argument is that British Restaurants were meant only for people who had lost the ability to cook at home owing to having their homes blitzed or their supplies of fuel cut off, and that any extension beyond this, and perhaps the supply of certain classes of evacuées, is illegitimate. The Minister of Food has apparently now promised the trade that no further British Restaurants will be opened without a special inquiry, if the caterers in the area apply for one, and that authorisation will not be given unless there is a proven shortage of accommodation. It is easy enough to see the caterers' point of view—for there is no compensation if a caterer is driven out of business by the competition of a British Restaurant. But are the office workers who have no canteens in their places of work, the factory and other manual workers who are in the same position, the evacuated persons who have few facilities for cooking at home, the members of households whose normal cooking member has gone to work on munitions and is out at midday—to say nothing of other special classes—to be deprived of the chance of a nourishing cheap meal on this account? More British Restaurants are urgently needed for all these classes. If the caterers have a grievance, take them over or compensate them.

* * *

The small shopkeepers, as well as the small caterers, have an increasing grievance; for many more of them are now being squeezed out, and the latest restrictions on deliveries, added to the depletion of man-power, will squeeze them out at an increasing rate. This is unavoidable, in view of the acute shortage of labour; but it is none the less grossly unfair. These members of the petty *bourgeoisie* are being deprived of their savings and of their foothold in the social system by thousands, without any assurance as to their future when the war is over. This is, of course, only one aspect of the general refusal to consider compensation for persons whose property is not detachable from their labour, as is usually that of the richer classes. In dealing with these classes in this way we are laying up a store of trouble for the future, especially if we attempt to return, in other respects, to the pre-war class system, and to enable the bigger firms to get going again, as if nothing had happened.

Mr. Greene's Release

Mr. Ben Greene, as the Home Secretary's letter makes clear, was detained last May under 18B on a number of counts. These may be divided into two categories. The first were suspicions due to Mr. Greene's "hostile associations"; that is, the Home Secretary felt that in view of Mr. Greene's political activities, connections, etc., he was better under detention at a period of acute national danger. Mr. Greene is now released because, as Mr. Morrison explains, adequate precautions can be taken without Mr. Greene's detention. Somewhat curiously, Sir John Anderson, who originally detained Mr. Greene, appears to have given an affidavit asserting that in the Home Secretary's opinion Mr. Greene was also guilty of a number of very serious criminal offences, which amount in fact to accusations of Fifth Columnism and treason. These allegations, which became public in the course of legal proceedings in the House of Lords, are now, in the words of Mr. Morrison's letter, "to be regarded as withdrawn." No one, least of all Mr. Greene, who has come out of Brixton suffering from six foot seven inches of rheumatism, can be satisfied with this apology. Some further restitution would appear to be necessary now that it is officially admitted that these charges were unfounded. The House of Commons was highly critical of Mr. Morrison on the 18B issue which arose in Mr. Gibbs' article in the *Economist* before Christmas. It is likely to take the view that the Home Secretary's affidavit making allegations apparently on insufficient and highly suspect evidence justifies Lord Atkin's opinion that the Home Secretary ought not to be the sole judge of evidence on which a man can be deprived of his reputation and his liberty.

ADVERTISED GOODS.—The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

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PARLIAMENT AND PREMIER

THE Prime Minister returned from the United States elated, proud, and self-confident. He had accomplished a great and indispensable mission. He had assisted a long step forward in the co-ordination of the Allied war effort. His presence in Washington so soon after the Japanese attack had been, too, of unquestionable moral value. There were some around him ready to calculate that the cheers of Washington and Ottawa would drown voices of criticism in London and that the predicament of Singapore would be more coolly judged against the grand sweep of the three phases of strategy which he had outlined in his speech to the Canadian Parliament. He arrived to find British public opinion more disturbed than at any time since the Norwegian campaign, and London newspapers carrying without comment on their front pages statements from Sydney to the effect that "if Singapore falls, Churchill will fall with it."

The defeats in Malaya, the state of war production, and the mass of dead wood in the Cabinet, are, of course, the principal causes of the profound public uneasiness which has resulted in an atmosphere of crisis at Westminster. In no case is the public much interested in mere inquests on the corpses of lost aerodromes, unachieved production targets and failed policies. The public, as everyone is tired of hearing, can "take" defeats. It can even swallow such explanations as are occasionally offered of particular production failures in particular places at particular times. It is prepared to let bygones be bygones. But it wants them to stay bygones. It is not the past, even the immediate past, that is worrying people. It is the future. It is the question whether anything is being done to prevent this sort of thing going on and on. The question whether, for example, the people and policies responsible for the tragic farce of imperial Government under fire in Malaya are not merely a microcosm of similar people and policies all carrying on in identical fashion in India and Burma? The question whether any single one of the factors which have kept our production 40 per cent. below capacity for months is being seriously tackled for the months ahead?

That the public retains its belief in Mr. Churchill as by far the best available Premier is beyond question.

It is also true that lying in wait somewhere on the right flank of the Conservative Party are elements which would like to weaken and undermine Mr. Churchill for purposes quite opposite to those which the majority of the people has in mind when it voices its criticisms: quite other than those which animated the "revolt" of the 40 M.P.'s in the Commons before Christmas.

The 1922 Committee is understood to have selected Sir John Anderson as its candidate for the succession. It would be a somewhat bitter irony if the country's distrust of Mr. Churchill's attitude to the Indian problem, for instance, were to open the way to the Premiership for Sir John Anderson, late of Bengal, or if the angry and bitter feeling in the factories were to place at the head of the Government the man who in the last production debate conceived the demand for more and better Government control as having something to do with the "nationalisation" of fine wines, cigars, and Old Masters. And yet the danger of such a development certainly exists. Particularly because there is at present no evidence that Mr. Churchill would at any time be prepared to fight with any sort of allies, however numerous and patriotic, against the Conservative Party machine, which is probably the only sub-lunary power of which he is frightened.

Here, then, is the dilemma. The public wants certain things done, and it wants Mr. Churchill to remain Prime Minister. But unfortunately exactly the things the public wants done are the things against doing which Mr. Churchill seems to have set himself most obstinately. His attitude to India is sufficiently well known—and the knowledge of it is itself a complicating factor in India itself. He has refused to appoint a Minister of Production. His confidence with regard to the whole production problem has bordered on complacency. He has certainly most seriously underestimated the degree to which working men and women fiercely keen to get on with producton have been and are "browned off" and rendered cynical and even apathetic by Governmental failures to remedy abuses, defects in organisation and weaknesses of plan. He treats criticism as if it were an affront; and it is partly because of a feeling that Mr. Churchill's position savours too much of personal ascendancy that the opposition was strong when he suggested having records made of his speeches to the Commons. Members feared a precedent which would build the Prime Minister up instead of inducing him to face the realities of the situation.

On the question of Cabinet reconstruction, sufficient light is thrown by the events of the past few days. On the eve of Mr. Churchill's return circumstantial reports of far-reaching Cabinet changes appeared in the press. They came from sources very close to the Conservative Party headquarters and the office of the Conservative Central Whip. But within a few hours of the Premier's return, these stories were officially denied. And then, two days later, the *Times* appeared with its first leader devoted to an insistent plea for change, declaring that "a thorough reconstruction is the accepted democratic way of signalling a fresh start."

It is unquestionable that in the country, and in the House of Commons, those who passionately demand a "fresh start," and equally passionately believe that it must be made under Mr. Churchill's continued leadership, are in an overwhelming majority over all others. It would be a tragedy if Mr. Churchill's personal prejudices and blind spots, or his loyalty to the Conservative Party, or his failure to find adequate advisers capable of truthfully reporting to him the real state of feeling in the Britain of January, 1942, were to produce either a crisis involving the Premiersnip, or a deadlock in which nothing is done because nobody dare rock the boat.

The forces for a "fresh start" are there. The immediate and exceedingly hard task of all people of good will who understand the gravity of the position is to organise them into an alliance which will mark as great a step forward in the vigour and organisation of the war effort as did the Churchill Coalition Government itself in the dark spring of 1941.

MINISTRY OF PRODUCTION

MR. CHURCHILL may yet find himself forced to agree to the creation of some sort of Ministry of Production. Names are being actively canvassed in the newspapers and in Parliament. For the most part they are the old names—Lord Beaverbrook, Mr. Bevin, Sir Andrew Duncan — and there is obviously a strong case against any of them. Lord Beaverbrook's mind is of the kind that is least fitted for the task of orderly and comprehensive planning. He concentrates on one thing at a time, and pushes everything else out of the way for the time being. He has drive, but he is always skidding. Mr. Bevin has not made so good a job of the Production Executive as to encourage the belief that he would make a good Minister of Production. He has character, but he has never shown the capacity to emancipate himself from the departmental machine. Sir Andrew Duncan's fault is different; it lies in his very close association with big business, which raises a doubt whether he is the man to deal with the self-controlling Controllers who are the bane of the Ministry of Supply. But, if none of these three will do, where are we to find another? Is Sir Stafford Cripps the man of destiny—unless indeed he is more needed for Indian affairs? He has courage, integrity, and a complete freedom from commitments—for he is no longer in the Labour Party and has, perhaps, no present intention of returning to it. We should certainly prefer Cripps to any of the others.

There are, as we see the matter, two quite different ideas about the functions which a Minister of Production ought to perform. According to one idea, he would take over the Ministries of Supply and Aircraft Production and the appropriate divisions of the Admiralty, and perhaps the Ministry of Labour as well, and would combine them into a single grand department, or federation of departments, with an inferior departmental minister at the head of each section. This notion has often been criticised on the ground that it would create altogether too top-heavy an organisation, and one which it would be past the capacity of any minister effectively to control. It obviously raises other difficulties as well. It is impossible to imagine Lord Beaverbrook continuing to work as Minister of Supply, or Mr. Bevin as Minister of Labour *under* a Minister of Production, and at the same time retaining their seats in the War Cabinet, where they would be in a position to challenge every decision with which they might disagree.

The second idea is that the Ministry of Production should be a Ministry of *Production* pure and simple, and that the existing Ministries of Supply and Aircraft Production and the relevant sections of the Admiralty should remain in being quite apart from it. These latter bodies would then represent the State as buyer of finished munitions —the demand side; whereas the Ministry of Production would be responsible for the organisation of output to meet their demands. It would be a technical Ministry *par excellence*, concerned with the means of getting output of all types up to the very maximum consistent with a balanced programme of production.

There are, no doubt, difficulties in this second conception, which would interpose the Ministry of Production between the departments representing demand and the private capitalist firms through which the bulk of the production is at present done. Indeed, a Production Ministry of this second type seems to us to imply a considerable advance towards the solution which we have advocated for a long time past—the effective taking over of the war industries, or at any rate of the big firms and combines which dominate them for the period of the war. If this were done, a real Ministry of Production would have a perfectly clear field of action. Its job would be, ignoring divisions of ownership between establishments, to organise the entire plant available for turning out war goods in such a way as to respond as fully as possible to the demands formulated by the other Ministries.

This type of Production Ministry would almost certainly have to be given final authority over the Ministry of Labour, or to have transferred to it certain sections of the Ministry of Labour which are concerned with production. Control of munitions labour would have to be passed over to a real Ministry of Production—the Ministry of Labour retaining its functions as a Ministry of National Service and in dealing with the broad duty of

allocating man-power between alternative uses. This solution, incidentally, would remove the need for making the Minister of Labour—Mr. Bevin or another—subject to the new Minister of Production, and would at the same time secure the unity of control in handling production problems which was the chief merit of the Ministry of Munitions in the last war.

We believe, then, that it is a mistake to attempt to deal with the question of appointing a Minister of Production apart from a revision of the entire policy so far followed in settling the relations between the State and big business under conditions of war. Doubtless a perception that this issue was also involved has lain at the back of a great deal of the persistent opposition to the appointment of a Minister of Production.

As soon as we begin to think of a Minister really in charge of production, it becomes apparent that he must be the person responsible for both allocating plant and labour to the various types of war output and for the technical efficiency of the productive process as a whole. Managements must be responsible to him, and not to functionless boards of directors; and he must be responsible for assigning not only manual labour, but also managerial and technical workers, to the positions at which their services can be made most useful in the national interest. It is an absurd anomaly at present that, whereas the Government can direct manual workers quite arbitrarily to go where their services are needed, even at the cost of great inconvenience and sometimes heavy loss of income, the State, when it wants a competent managerial staff, even for one of its own factories, has to bid against private enterprise in a competitive market.

This anomaly has just been strikingly illustrated in the case of the new Royal Ordnance Factories which Lord Beaverbrook has been trying, apparently not without success, to hand over to capitalist management. The only substantial argument that has been adduced in favour of the transfer is that the State, being tied by the Treasury to Civil Service rates of pay, cannot secure the services of even tolerably capable managers against the competition of private enterprise—a state of affairs which, incidentally, throws a great deal of light on the allegations of inefficiency that have been made against a number of the existing R.O.F.s. The natural reaction of any decent citizen—and certainly that of any manual worker subject to being ordered from place to place at the Government's will—is to ask why the State does not simply order the competent managers it needs to go and work where they are needed, irrespective of the higher inducements which the big private firms are prepared to offer to them. This is indeed a very pertinent point; but the right answer is that the entire managerial skill of the country, as well as the manual labour force, ought to be fully at the State's disposal.

A Minister of Production should be a Minister of *Production*, and as such should have complete control of the productive resources on which his success in delivering the goods must depend. The job of the Ministers of Supply and Aircraft Production, and of the Admiralty in its relevant activities, is to make up their schedules of demands for the different kinds of war output, with the requisite priorities for such and such quantities of the different things; to agree with the Production Ministry on designs and specifications; to inspect and pass the finished products; and to agree with the Production Ministry on the bookkeeping prices that are to be set down against each article. The other Ministries should make contracts only with the Ministry of Production, which should itself, having taken over the big firms, proceed to make contracts with the middle-sized and small firms now so largely working as sub-contractors to the great firms and combines.

This system would make possible the decentralisation for which we argued strongly in an article published a fortnight ago. The Ministry of Production, being the sole responsible agent for all war production, could decentralise authority in a way which is impossible while there are several different ministries all placing contracts, often with the same firms, or while the big national firms and combines, with their satellite sub-contractors, stand inescapably in the way of any ordered arrangement of production on a regional basis. The Regional Boards, now armed with altogether inadequate authority, could be used with real effectiveness under such a system.

In America, Mr. Churchill and his fellow-negotiators have been trying to make a combined production plan for this country and its allies. What hope can there be of an effective combined plan when we are still working, in this country, without any real plan of our own, and without any perception that production is a job by itself, and pre-eminently a technical job which needs tackling from a technical point of view? That brings us to our last point that the Ministry of Production, when it comes, will need staffing at the top mainly with technicians and men of high managerial experience, and not with regular Civil Servants—much less with men whose main experience is with the financial wangles of the capital market rather than with actual production.

THE BOTTOM OF THE WELL

Lord Addison's "nincompoop" probably marks the turning of a leaf of history. It is the British tradition to avoid the blackguarding of the necessarily dumb services: on this occasion the epithet nut-shelled the desire, engendered by bewilderment, for a scapegoat; but a very little reflection must show how unjust this breach of good manners was. The British public is, fortunately, very fair-minded, and though Cassandra and his company may extol bad manners as good strategy, I doubt if they will in the long run prove convincing. We are fighting for British, not Nazi, ways. If there had been only one aeroplane and two men in the whole of Malaya, it was patently necessary, if only for strategic reasons, that Brooke-Popham should do his best to make the world—meaning, in terms of broadcasting and official pronouncements, Japan and the Axis—think otherwise. He might sue Whitehall with blood and tears, work in Singapore with toil and sweat; he could not manufacture aeroplanes or men in Malaya, and he could not, quite obviously, let the enemy know that our defences were hopeless. Or could he? What would have happened to a commander-in-chief who stated boldly that he could not hold his territory because Whitehall would not supply the means? Dismissal, and no publication of his views, I guess. What then could he do? He was bound, strategically, to do his level best to convince the potential enemy that he would meet with strong resistance; and I have little doubt that he had to do it with blood and tears. History, if not we, will accord a very handsome apology to Brooke-Popham; I should have thought more of Winston Churchill if he had done it first.

Lord Addison's epithet is historic, because it puts the limelight on three tremendous questions. First, is it politicians or generals who are ultimately responsible for inadequate preparation or poor strategy? Second, will the public ever learn to trust men who fearlessly tell the unpleasant truth, or will such men always be gagged until their views are proved—always too late—unpalatably right? And, thirdly, how much can a Government of the people, etc., *pace* Lincoln, ever tell "the people" in time of war? These questions strike at the heart of the democratic system, and, however unpleasant they are, sooner or later we shall have to face them.

A word about "gagging." When I say that Mr. So-and-so is "gagged," I mean exactly this: His speeches in Parliament will be duly reported in *Hansard*, which gets to a smaller and smaller minority; they will have less and less publicity in the press, because the Government, by its growing monopoly of advertising matter, has more and more control over the press; and the B.B.C. may be open to pressure when the Government wants to "pipe down" on anyone. This country has to make up its mind whether it is best for the democratic system that responsible officers or politicians should say boldly: "We are in a muddle owing to inefficiency and we cannot carry out our jobs," or whether they should say "Churchill's in his heaven and all's right with the world." And this is a matter, in my opinion, of winning or not winning the war.

Lord Addison's first fatuous idea is that Singapore is to blame. How could it be? Whitehall chose the men: Whitehall provided the material: Whitehall, to a very large extent, conditioned the strategy. Let Lord Addison look nearer home. Let him consider the speeches of Beaverbrook, as related to our present performance in the air; let him study the pronouncements of Sinclair and Alexander; let him even, over dinner, meditate on Woolton; let him examine the War Office records, the careers of the once-so-boosted Gorts and Ironsides, the *Times* leaders, the *Daily Express* headlines, before he generously scatters a few more "nincompoops." The nincompoops may be under his nose.

Secondly, is the public going to relegate truth to the bottom of the well? By the public I mean *you* who read this; not anyone else. Are *you* content to accept whatever salary you may be earning on condition that *you* praise the established order of things until, of course, it is proved wrong, and you can safely go on to the other side? Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, may fall: let us face it, probably will fall; and you, you, personally, I mean, will say that Pownall or Wavell or Hart is a nincompoop, won't you? How very nice! How grateful they must feel, these soldiers whose motto is: "Heads Churchill wins, tails I lose," to the Old Country! The cigar, as once the umbrella, has become the totem of the English tribe; woe betide him who derides it! But I can, and do.

And thirdly, how far is democracy practicable in war? Secret sessions are not democracy. Yet information must not go to the enemy. How do we reconcile the two? Sir Shenton Thomas has—at long last—said it. "The day of minute papers is gone; every officer must accept responsibility to the full in taking decisions . . . the essential thing is speed in action. Officers who cannot take responsibility should be replaced by those who can. Seniority is of no account." Read, mark, learn and inwardly digest—you, my reader; you, the nine thousand unnecessary employees of the B.B.C.; you, the God knows how many superfluous thousands of the Ministries of Supply, Labour and Aircraft Production; you, whoever you may be, who add by your actions to the suppression of truth. For truth, however late, will win; and truth, however unpalatable, is known to every one of you, without my writing this.

LIONEL FIELDEN

SUBMERGED HUNGARY

In the East of Europe, in the triangle between the Baltic, the Black and Adriatic Seas, many millions of half-starved and miserable human beings are living under the most desperate economic conditions, inconceivable to most of the people in this country. This ignored *quantité négligeable* forms a vast army composed of the landless peasantry, farm workers, and those who possess about enough land to starve on. The problem of the landless peasantry is of acute importance: (1) Because these discontented elements are potential allies of a new order which would give them access to the much-coveted land and offer them better living conditions. (2) Any planning of the new post-war Europe involves first of all the solution to the land problem, without which no stable conditions can be created. We don't doubt that if nothing is done about it, the exasperated and wretched masses will find a solution themselves which probably won't be the most desirable one, and will occasion a great amount of unnecessary human suffering and bloodshed.

Much the worst situation in this respect is found in Hungary, which has remained in a semi-feudal condition, the peasantry lacking the necessary political weapons to be able to do anything about it. This Eldorado of the landlords, therefore, could only be kept up by the help of autocracy in the past, and totalitarian dictatorship in the present. On the other hand, a militarist and aggressive Germany needed and needs the large estate for its war economy, as the splitting up of the land would be bound to disturb, temporarily, the supply of grain. Therefore the economic interest of the land-owning class is linked up closely with that of Germany, especially during the war, when it finds a sure market for its products. It is but wishful thinking to imagine that the rulers of Hungary can change their attitude towards Germany until Hitler's armies are entirely defeated. And will they be of any use then? It is the discontented rural population, the victim No. 1 of German militarism, which is the potential ally of the Western democracies, and has to be made to understand that its liberation is linked up with British victory.

In 1913, a year before the Hungarian rulers brought Hungary into the last war, about 8,000 people out of 20,000,000 possessed 22,000,000 acres of land, which meant a far greater territory than that of the Trianon Hungary. The argument was that the interest of the country demanded the preservation of the large estate intact, thus confusing, as happens so often, individual interest with that of the nation. The majority of the entailed properties were founded in Hungary after 1869, at a period when other countries were doing their best to rid themselves of them. Their consequence was the ruin of the small holdings. In the over-populated villages the standard of living dropped to such an extent that the peasantry had to migrate in large numbers. From 1899-1913 emigration to North America alone was about 2,000,000. In 1918, after the last war, the Karolyi Government set up a land reform which would have distributed between the landless peasantry all land exceeding 500 acres, for which the State would remunerate the owners. In Rumania a similar law granted only 200 acres to the owners. Under the Karolyi reform the landless peasants would get as much land as they could cultivate, and also as much as would be sufficient for the establishment of the medium farmers, who would obtain 100-200 acres. Additionally, the speeding up of production through agricultural boards was planned. Simultaneously large agricultural co-operatives were to be established. Karolyi started this reform on his own lands first, at the end of February 1919. This very mild land reform was considered by the landowners as Communism, and they tried all means to prevent it. They successfully denounced his Government to the foreign allied missions as Bolshevik. In default of allied aid, the Karolyi Government was defeated by the Communists, and on the day of the proclamation of the proletarian dictatorship we witnessed the paradoxical scene of seeing the aristocrats fall into each other's arms, rejoicing that the dreaded reform would not be carried through. The Communists would not give land to the peasants, and in any case their rule would be easy to break with the aid of the Rumanians and Czechs, after which everything would return to its ordinary course. Their hopes materialised a hundred per cent. The government of Bela Kun declared all land exceeding 100 acres to be the property of the State without compensation to the owner. The small and medium holdings with farm and house were to remain untouched. The expropriated lands were then to be turned into co-operatives, and the expropriated landlords were asked to remain the administrators, mostly of their own properties, thus having the pleasant task of guarding it for themselves for when the rule of the Communists would come to an end. In this way half of the cultivated land was run on a co-operative basis.

When Admiral Horthy set up his contra-revolutionary régime in the wake of the Rumanians who had drained the country dry, even he was obliged to start with land reform. He founded the order of the "Heros" so as to have a stable armed force against the unsatisfied peasantry. Of course this could only be done on a small scale. At the end of 1938, 4,400 hero holdings were established on a territory of 72,000 acres. Eventually Nagyatadis' famous land reform was drawn up by the representative of the big land-owners—Gyula Rubinek—under which those entitled would receive about 3 acres. The result of this so-called land reform was that, 700,000 acres were distributed between 412,000 men, making an average of one acre per person—quite insufficient to support a family. This sham land reform was applied only to 8% of the cultivated land, while in Rumania 26%, in Estonia 49% and in Lithuania 46% were used for distribution. Even to-day 36 big landowners in Hungary own more land than 1,200,000 dwarf holdings. When the census was taken in 1930, 67% of the population was entirely landless or possessed less than the minimum needed for existence. In the last 40 years mortality has dropped 50%. At the same time the wages of the farm labourers corresponded to about 2d. a day for work of 12-20 hours. But these were the lucky days of the year, harvest time, which did not last long and which had to provide for all the year round, when there was nothing to earn; the period of seasonal work lasted about 70-90 days. The law of 1898, which was nicknamed the Slave Law, and is still in vigour to-day, obliges the farm worker to sign a contract with the landlord in front of the notary, and in case of a breach on his part of this forced agreement he is liable to two months inprisonment. All combinations among agricultural workers are prohibited by the law, and it is punishable to address, attend or hire rooms for meetings for the purpose of "inciting" to form Trade Unions. These conditions naturally have not improved since the war, but have probably got worse. Can we be surprised, therefore, that a country with such medieval conditions (Hungary being neither a democracy nor a plutocracy, much rather a "countocracy," as someone justly called it) should choose Hitler as her ally, or master? For only in a Europe ruled by Hitler can a semi-feudal and socially unjust system be kept going.

I believe that one of the most important factors in the struggle for victory is the East European peasantry. It should by no means be neglected. With the right policy and propaganda it could be turned into a most vital V column for sabotaging the Nazi war effort on the land. It is to these people that Britain has to give hope, and make them understand that they have everything to gain if they resist the Nazis and their rulers who have betrayed them. Why should they risk their lives if Allied victory is to offer them no change for the better?

CATHERINE ANDRASSY

Quick with the dead

PAPER

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to Pte. H. Stern.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

"There are only two books worth keeping in any house—your Bible and your bankbook," declared Councillor James Kirkhope when urging members of Dunfermline Town Council to redouble their efforts in the waste paper salvage campaign.—*The (Scottish) Daily Express.*

When Hitler appeared on the balcony of the Reich Chancellery after declaring war against the United States, Mrs. P. G. Wodehouse elbowed her way through a crowd 12 deep, waving her pekingese aloft and shouting in English "Come on, Plummy, you must see Hitler."—*Daily Mail.*

I watched a Briton who has been in Malaya all his life smashing up his house. He concentrated mostly on his cherished possessions, such as furnishings, his radio set, and wall decorations. On the wall he destroyed a priceless hand-painted vellum of Kipling's "*If*," which he recited bitterly, punctuating the verses with blows from a hammer.—*Daily Express.*

A good many people, not all of them football fans, regret that the B.B.C. is not making a general broadcast of the England *v.* Scotland soccer match at Wembley next Saturday. . . .

It would do Europe good to hear the roar from 75,000 British throats.—Peterborough, *Daily Telegraph.*

Mr. Joseph Arthur Rank, millionaire miller, yesterday succeeded the late Mr. Oscar Deutsch as chairman of Odeon Theatres.

Last month he became chief of Gaumont-British Picture Corporation. His film interests are now worth more than £20,000,000.

A leading supporter of the Methodist Church, Mr. Rank first became interested in films when he realised their potential value for religious instruction.—*News Chronicle.*

Mr. A. V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty, who had cancelled a private engagement in order to be present, was full of the news that Halfaya had surrendered unconditionally. Then Mrs. Churchill was able to tell the Premier that she had just seen England score the first goal in the international match against Scotland at Wembley.—*Reynolds News.*

A LONDON DIARY

We have one ally on the Continent whom I hope no one is foolish enough to welcome. Typhus, always endemic in Poland, White Russia, the Ukraine, the Baltic States, the Balkans and Spain, has now reached the proportions of a considerable epidemic in several of these areas. According to reliable Swiss sources, thousands are dying of typhus in Polish ghettos. Typhus is spread only by lice and thrives where there is under-nourishment, exhaustion, exposure and dirt. These are precisely the conditions of a retreating army when there is no time for cleansing and delousing, and where the same quarters and sleeping places are occupied without interval by one set of men after another. When, therefore, we learn that there is now typhus also in Germany, the cleanest of places, and by no means seriously under-nourished, we know that rigorous precautions have not prevented the disease spreading from Poland and the Russian battlefield. Some hundreds of cases are reported in towns from the Baltic to the Rhine. The Germans can no doubt control this epidemic now. But typhus, disease of delirium and horror, knows no frontiers and is difficult to stop once it catches hold. In the very areas of Russia in which the fighting is now taking place and all across Poland from 1919 to 1922 ten million caught typhus and three million actually died. The Nansen mission with great resources, skill and devotion took two years to break the cycle of famine and disease. Typhus begins to reach its climax in March, preventing the spring sowing and producing famine in the next winter, which increases the typhus. Let no one rejoice, I say, in this still underdeveloped but growing ally, whose help might yet make our wars look like the internal squabblings of an ant-heap before the harrow passes over it.

* * *

To have been born in the year of the Paris Commune, before ever there was a trade union in Russia; to have been twenty-one when the student Lenin started the first "Marxist Circle" at what is now Kuibishev, and at seventy-one to stand as representative of the largest Trade Union organisation in the world on the platform of the Albert Hall while delegates representing 700,000 British trade unionists sing the Internationale—how improbable a career! But it is true of Nikolayeva, the principal Russian speaker at the Conference organised last Sunday by the Trades Union Congress and London Trades Council to hear reports on the work of the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee. She spoke with immense vigour. The tone of her speech and of the other Russian speeches seemed to confirm reports that the Russian trade union delegation, which has toured the country, does not feel that British industry is yet by any means pulling its full weight in the war. "The tasks set by the Anglo-Soviet Committee must be fulfilled," said Nikolayeva sternly. And the other speakers emphasised how "unforgiveable" it would be if either the British or the Russians were satisfied with present production. As the C.P. line is strict alliance with the Churchill Government (so lately rank imperialist) and no time wasted in attacking capitalism, the invocations to increased production from the Soviet visitors please even the most reactionary. Some there were in the Albert Hall who were inclined to allow exasperation at Governmental and managerial inefficiency or worse to overlay the necessary enthusiasm for immediate production. The exasperation is fierce and thoroughly justified among workers, managers, technicians, and indeed amongst all sorts of people who want to get on with the job. Soviet influence at the moment is to support the view that you must get on with the job whether you can get Mr. Churchill to get on with his improvements at the top or not.

* * *

Speaking of Nikolayeva's powerful speech, I wish I could persuade her to stick to the authentic and ghastly facts of the German invasion and avoid atrocities that occur in the propaganda of every war and that have never yet stood inquiry. God knows there is plenty of horror and plenty of Nazi barbarism without resurrecting that famous baby which in this as in so many other wars has been thrown into a furnace and pinned on to its mother's breast with a bayonet. It is the same baby, no doubt, that had its hands cut off in Belgium in 1914, was thrown about on the tips of Uhlan bayonets, and a hundred years earlier was eaten for breakfast by Napoleon.

* * *

I have no doubt at all that Mr. Rust, editor of the *Daily Worker*, and Professor Haldane, his chairman, were perfectly sincere in telling the company at Tuesday's luncheon that they are concerned to-day exclusively with winning the war. The real reason for maintaining the ban must be that Mr. Churchill and some of his advisers fear an increase in Communist influence. If so, they are short-sighted. There are many reasons for disliking the *Worker*, but is there a reputable argument that I can see for preventing its publication? The method used for its suppression can be employed by the Government against any paper which cares to be critical. As Haldane pointed out, in questions of 18B there is at least a judicial committee to advise Morrison; under 2D nothing is required except the Home Secretary's "opinion." For a variety of reasons (including belief in free speech, and anxiety about production for the war effort) a very large body of opinion now supports the lifting of the ban. I found myself between Beatrix Lehmann and Ronald Frankau; nearby were T. L. Horabin, H. G. Wells and the Bishop of Bradford! The most eloquent speaker was a shop steward, who told us that in one of the big factories near London, where the workers were dead keen to produce, they were only working 50 per cent. of capacity, which was far less than they had been doing before the war. Among those who favour lifting the ban are Prof. A. V. Hill, Conservative M.P. for Cambridge and Secretary of the Royal Society, and a considerable section of Fleet Street, for which A. J. Cummings spoke, I thought, with much common sense and effect. Frank Owen, from whom a letter was read explaining that it was important to lift the ban because otherwise the *Evening Standard* might be stopped and we might all be reduced to the ghastly fate of reading the *Daily Telegraph*.

* * *

The United States is one of those distant countries of which we know so little. But we have learnt something about it in the last two years from B.B.C. Commentaries. About another distant country which has been in the war since the beginning and which is more closely tied to us, and which has a population nearly three times the size of the U.S.A., we still know and hear almost nothing. Yet there should be news to tell of India, which has had a civilisation for three thousand years or so, has as much a life and history of its own as Britain or the United States, and which happens to be supplying large numbers of troops who are daily killing and dying in a war into which they were taken without their consent, and which is being fought for objects which, as Mr. Churchill has explained, do not apply to India. The only Indian news supplied by the B.B.C. has been during half an hour on the Forces programme at 10.20 on Sunday mornings. The first half of this period was news from India, the second Indian music designed to cheer up Indian troops. A fortnight ago, just when the Indian news got exciting, and even for the moment hopeful, the news part of this programme abruptly ceased. Is there a good reason for ignoring India? Spokesmen from the Domininons and U.S.A. constantly speak to us over the wireless, often one of them does the postscript on Sunday night. Has it never occurred to the authorities that an Indian should be asked to speak? Would it sow discontent among the Indian troops or the British public or among anyone, if Sapru made his proposals for linking an Empire which Mr. Churchill seems determined to sunder, or even if Nehru or Jinnah were allowed to debate before the British public the grand issue which is still, oddly enough, in the decision of British democracy.

* * *

George came in with red eyes one day last week. They had been trying a surprise gas attack in Holborn and caught almost everyone without a mask. Hardly anyone does carry a mask in spite of numerous appeals and acres of paper that have been spent in trying to persuade us. I doubt if even these surprise attacks persuade those who are caught. Why? Because people have been told so much about gas for so long that it is clearly in their consciousness that anything they are told about it, short of an actual order, is merely propaganda. If the Government one day tells us that Hitler's *Luftwaffe*, now being refitted in the Mediterranean, is being concentrated not apparently for an attack on Malta, or North Africa, or Turkey or Spain, but for an attack in the West, and that they have reason to expect that Hitler would try the surprise effect of gas, and then gives a definite order that gas masks are to be tested and universally carried, then everyone will carry them. In a word, the resistance is to propaganda, not to carrying a mask. An immediate improvement can, I believe, be obtained in training a large number of people who would have to play an active part in a raid. Many of those who have heard lectures about the different types of gas, or smelt them out of bottles, have by now forgotten which is which. They need, if the Government really thinks that gas is coming, more serious tests in the actual use of gas, such as many soldiers went through during the last war.

* * *

An interesting story reaches me about Sir Otto Niemeyer, who is now on a financial mission to Chungking. He asked one of the Chinese officials where he had learnt his English and had his training. The reply was that he had been at the London School of Economics. He added that he was not the only official who had studied there. Sir Otto, lately created Chairman of the Court of Governors of the L.S.E., was delighted and told his Chinese acquaintance to bring all the other ex-L.S.E. officials to tea. He expected half a dozen. I am told that about 60 arrived.

* * *

I have a hunch, that I hope proves mistaken, that Sir Stafford Cripps will not after all spend time in India, but will come back quickly in response to a request to become a member of the War Cabinet.

* * *

Sir Richard Acland has put down the following resolution for the House of Commons to consider. It has a fine seventeenth century flavour and says, I believe, what many are thinking.

> That the principles, practices and habits of thought of big business and traditional office-holders constitute a burden too grievous to be borne by the people of the British Islands and Empire in this struggle for freedom. CRITIC

PLUTO AND PERSEPHONE

PLANNING policy is hardening. The general trend of official and technical opinion has been summarised recently in a public lecture by an economist of repute as follows: "Our aim should be to spread industry much more evenly over the country than it is at present. It is absurd to have vast tracts of the North and Midlands containing fabulous concentrations of industry—the ten towns of Lancashire making an endless chain, the five towns of the Potteries, and so on . . . Where shall we seek to divert it? Possibly to the West Country, East Anglia, Scotland, Gloucestershire, Somerset, or even Cumberland or Westmoreland." At the same meeting another leading exponent of this predominant school of thought estimated that between five and six million people would be surplus from existing industrial towns, available to be settled either in new towns or in extensions of such existing small towns as were judged suitable for enlargement.

What does this policy imply? Does it square with facts as opposed to theories and assumptions? Let us be realistic. An "industry" is not some airy economic commodity, some occupation or series of processes which has grown in a locality by chance, which can be moved without injury or inconvenience not only to itself but to the great network of industries of which each forms a part. The population of Britain is not an army of occupation, without ties and traditions, preferences and prejudices, to be moved like robots about the land of Britain. Nor are our planners supermen, capable of turning Britain into a vast procrustean bed in which towns can be stretched or lopped into mutilated uniformity and still live.

Consider the facts; for this is not a matter of opinion, but a matter of fact. Four out of every five of us live in towns, nearly half of the population being concentrated in the seven industrial regions of London, the Midlands, South Wales, the Manchester area, the West Riding of Yorkshire, the North-east Coast, and round Glasgow. This concentration of population is not, however, fortuitous: it is based on the deeply significant fact that—except for London, the one conglomeration whose growth during the past 20 years has been indefensibly artificial—each area is the site of coal and often, too, of iron-fields. Once realise this truth and the cities of Britain fall into two main groups: one based on concentrated and large-scale, the other on dispersed, industry. First, towns founded on industries which extract their raw material from beneath the land—such as coal and iron, and with these can be grouped fishing. Secondly, towns based on industries concerned with the produce of the surface of the land—of agriculture in all its branches. Pluto and Persephone, in short.

Analyse these two basic types of town and quite definite biological differences appear, differences so fundamental and so clearly defined that it is astonishing they should not have been noted before. Founded to fulfil different functions, totally dissimilar in character, they cannot by their nature be made to approximate in size, character or anything else without death to both. It would be as fantastic to insist on the frog and the cow fusing into an amorphous hybrid as it would be to level these two essentially different types of settlement into neutral uniformity. Yet that is what is being seriously proposed in authoritative circles.

Take size. Agricultural towns are by their nature comparatively small, a few with from twenty to fifty thousand inhabitants, but the majority subsidiary towns with one to five thousand. Based on an industry whose workshops are the widely dispersed farms and fields, orchards and forests of the surrounding countryside, they are chiefly administrative, professional, commercial and servicing centres. Their natural, independent industries are none of them the so-called "foot-loose" industries, but are closely allied to the basic agricultural occupation of the region—leather and wool; or fruit and vegetable preserving; or butter and cheesemaking; or brewing; or the manufacture of wooden or metal agricultural implements, and so on. And because agriculture is in its essence beautiful and attractive, these towns and villages are naturally also places to which people come for holidays. They can thus support more theatres and other cultural activities, more amusements and shops than their size would naturally warrant. Particularly and increasingly will this become true as a result of holidays with pay and the greater leisure which mechanisation should bring. To graft alien industries on to these small specialised centres of population, with their widely diversified natural industries and services, would be to graft a cancer on to a healthy body. There is, in fact, no need to worry about Persephone except to protect her. If agriculture is flourishing and secure, if its by-products are exploited to the utmost, its prosperity and that of the men and women employed in and through it will increase, will be enough to make and keep these towns and villages happy and healthy, will be able naturally to attract and absorb new workers.

Industrial towns and areas are a very different kettle of fish. It is they that are giving our planners such headaches. The present policy is for flight, bag and baggage, foot and horse, from these stricken areas: to bundle industry, with its incipient ranks of unemployed, its inconvenient hordes of "hands," into other centres, into any other centres which seem capable of hiding them. But this is no solution. A firm grasp of the nettle, bold and impartial analysis, seems to offer a more constructive approach.

First, again, the question of size. This fashionable shuddering away from large towns as such seems rather a sentimental anachronism. Pluto is naturally large. Seams of coal and iron are concentrated affairs, the towns based on them must be centred on and round the workplaces. This form of industry is diametrically opposite to that of agriculture. No longer the independent worker ploughing, sowing, reaping over wide areas; no longer the town independent of but focusing the needs of scattered workers. A large market town would be accounted a very small industrial town. The actual occupations are concentrated, communal, co-operative. Thousands of workers can be employed by one firm alone, within a comparatively small compass. Homes and all they imply must be within reasonable distance of the centres where hundreds of thousands of men and women congregate to earn their living. For industries based on coal and iron are tremendously interdependent. Rarely beautiful in the accepted sense, they have their own strange grandeur, they attract and breed a type of citizen which needs no dilution, no apology. But life in these areas could be immensely improved; its drawbacks should be mitigated; stores of untapped, potentially rich, warm vital energy await release. It only needs a new attitude to these basic extractive industries, which have suffered so terribly and so unnecessarily in the recent past. Once coal, for instance, is considered as the source of most energy, most power, once it is regarded as a commodity to be conserved and yet exploited to the full, a mine immediately becomes the focal point, the fountain head of a whole series of by-product industries, a magnet drawing to it an infinite variety of new trades, new professions and new interests, transforming each area from a derelict, unsightly shambles, dependent on every whim of the export trade, into a nucleus of scientific, experimental thought and action—the core of a vast diversification of industries based, and naturally based, on the products of the region.

All very well, it may be said, but these areas are overcrowded. What about those five million people said to be surplus in those regions? What about those congested urban areas of which we hear so much? Well, analyse these areas. It will be found that the congestion is only superficial; the problem is one of derelict factories, empty sites, redundant roads, bad and wasteful use of land. Manchester, for example, has an average of only 28 persons, 7 dwellings, per acre within its boundaries: yet of the 43 square miles which it covers, less than 4 square miles is open space. Within a radius of 25 miles of that great city live 4 million people—over one-tenth of the population of Great Britain. Yet this means an average of only three persons to the acre throughout the region. Here is no case for decentralisation, no need for new towns. On the contrary. And this is typical. The case seems clear for a radical replanning of these seven great industrial areas within their present confines, for their present populations—freeing great wedges of land for market-gardens, parks, playgrounds and all the needs of civilised life. Surely the need is for a careful infusion of new, relevant industries into these areas to replace those which are languishing or dead, rather than the abstraction from them of theoretically redundant industries. Here is the nerve centre, here the core of the problem of reconstruction. Pluto needs a blood transfusion, not a leech. ELIZABETH DENBY

"PAINTERS ALWAYS WRITE WELL"

DR. EMMONS'S book about Sickert gives reviewers occasion to repeat one of their pet tags—"Painters always write well." Of course they don't, but the dictum has the merit of wounding, as by accident, a whole flock of colleagues with a single stone. A critic can extol painters' prose without obliging one professional writer. More charitable explanations are permissible. Literary critics, as their extravagances into art-criticism show, are apt to fancy that painters are trying to do pretty much what writers are trying to do—that is, express literary conceits: only they are trying to do it in line and colour. Were that the case, a painter when he wrote would be exchanging a blunt instrument for a sharp one, and would be the better half of an author before he began: but that is not the case. Or, maybe, a writer, confronted by painters' prose—herein resembling a painter confronted by the drawings of a child—will fall into a fit of envious despair before the inimitable freshness of ignorance, and murmur crossly, "Painters always write well."

But the fact is, anyone will write well who has something to say and can say it. In every trade, profession or calling are people with something to say; but the ability to say it is rare. The art of saying exactly what one feels or thinks or knows is, like other arts, a gift—a gift which can be improved by study, practice and taking thought. The gift is rare, and the combination of intelligence, taste and industry necessary to improvement abnormal. Almost everyone who thinks he has something important to say wants to say it aloud; that is why schoolboys, when they fall in love, invariably burst into song. It is then, or rather later, that most of them discover that

they have no talent. The exceptions, those who have even a little, as likely as not become professional writers; and we get, if we are lucky, a Rupert Brooke. If they labour to improve their talent, these may produce two or three good books apiece. Then, having perfected the gift of saying, they discover that they have nothing more to say. It is too late now to stop: for one thing, they depend for their living on producing a book, if not two books a year; for another, they have acquired the habit of sitting down each morning before a white sheet of paper which, to feel comfortable, they must denigrate before lunch-time. The stream of talent continues to flow, the wheels of art revolve, but there is no grist in the mill. That way lies an endless succession of Arthur Bensons. Only once in a way does the stream swell into the flood of genius, bearing in convoys of material whenever they are wanted, and by some miracle supplying matter as well as manner of its own. Shakespeare was a professional writer, and a prolific one.

From the flatulence of the common pro' the amateur—be he painter, tailor, soldier, sailor or just one of the unemployed—should be exempt, since presumably he writes only when he has something to say. On the other hand, not only are the chances at least a thousand to one that he has no gift, or having some has failed to cultivate it, but probably he will not so much as suspect that to say exactly what one wants to say requires any particular talent or any science at all. That is why the writings of men of action and business are apt to be unreadable and sometimes are quite unintelligible. Of such the minds are full, but they have not spoken their minds. In them was abundance of thought and feeling, of facts and recollection, but what has been set down on paper are a few conventional pomposities, culled from books, a pack of newspaper clinches, hundreds of ever-ready, fit-all phrases, and a gaggle of words grammatically, that is logically, unconnected. This is what we get when people who cannot believe that having something to say is not enough take up their pens, as they probably put it, to state in plain English, in reference to a crying scandal, which viewed objectively is somewhat unique, and which was ventilated in your issue of the 22nd ult. that forthwith and out of hand it should be firmly liquidated; or even when they write a letter to the *Times*.

Painters, since they are artists, know better. They know that conception is only half the battle, the other half being execution. Unfortunately, this knowledge neither engenders a talent for writing, nor would it supply leisure and inclination to cultivate an adscititious gift. Consequently most painters write badly, just as most writers would paint badly if they tried to paint at all, as Mr. Aldous Huxley does and D. H. Lawrence did. Samuel Butler's pictures have no merit as paintings. Whether our greatest living stylist, Max Beerbohm, can be said to paint pictures is a nice question; anyhow, judged as pictures, his caricatures are inconsiderable. Hazlitt's portrait of Lamb is another matter, but then Hazlitt had been trained. Like M. Jourdain, painters sometimes find themselves obliged to write prose; and, as the open letters they draft and the prefaces with which they enrich their catalogues show, they are seldom good at it. Generally, when they put pen to paper, they are victims of circumstance, and as such cannot be blamed; also they cannot be reckoned painter-writers. But others there are, not driven by the hard necessities of life, nor yet by momentary vexation or a pang of passing vanity, who have written because they had something to say and thought they could say it. The question is—Could they?

Some could; but before naming them there is a distinction to be drawn. Of those who have both painted memorable pictures and written books to be found in the London Library, a few are not painter-writers but writer-painters. Rossetti and Morris are obvious examples; Blake was as much author as painter, and so was that brilliant writer, Roger Fry; so, some may argue, were Fromentin and Amaury-Duval. But, seeing that Fromentin has two pictures in the Louvre, and that Amaury-Duval wasted much of his life smirching canvas, and walls even, I think both must be reckoned painter-writers, in which case here are two that wrote admirably: Fromentin, indeed, has given a minor masterpiece to French literature. That grandfather of art-history, Vasari, a feeble painter and fine architect, expressed himself agreeably and knowingly in words. On the other hand, Michelangelo, who had something to say if ever man had, struggles visibly in the coils of an art he has not mastered. His sonnets, justly admired for the force and majesty of the thoughts that half emerge, are unjustly lauded, especially by those who have little or no Italian, as triumphs in the poetic art. In fact they are crabbed and hardly to be understood, not so much because the matter is ineffable, as because the painter-sculptor knew not how to express it. He could not write. No more, I am told, could Leonardo. But I must confess I never took his notes for literature. Finding them difficult, I attributed the difficulty rather to lack of perspicacity in the reader than of perspicuity in the prose. Apparently dishonours are easy.

So far as I know, the best writer amongst painters proper is either Fromentin or Reynolds. Reynolds had important ideas to impart and much information, and he elaborated a style appropriate to his purpose. Of his successors as lecturers at the Royal Academy the best may be Fuseli, who also had a gift which he, too, cultivated seriously: the poet Cowper accepted the painter's notes and emendations to his translation of Homer. But besides being a painter, Fuseli was a foreigner, so perhaps one admires his use of the English language for much the same reasons as those for which Johnson was willing to admire a woman preaching or a dog walking on its hinder legs. For all that, it is the age of specialisation; the later nineteenth and twentieth century has been an age in which cobblers seemed incapable of sticking to their lasts. I should not be surprised to hear that stevedores had written about strategy, since I know that painters have written about metaphysics. They have written about all sorts of things; and as most of those who wrote were bad painters (or sculptors) they have merely made themselves more ridiculous by showing that they were bad writers, too. But Whistler, who was neither a bad nor a very good painter, wrote brilliantly. What he had to say was as often as not silly or vulgar, or both; but he knew how to say it. He was a far better writer than Delacroix, who had a far better mind. And Sickert, who was at one time Whistler's disciple in painting, remains his pupil when he writes to the papers. What Sickert has to say is often funny, and, as Dr. Emmons has shown by copious quotation, more often thoughtful than I, at any rate, had supposed; but it is not exceptionally well said. His style, for that of an amateur, is uncommonly easy. Now, to appear to write with ease is all very well; to write easily is what the newspaper men do. Though he is a better proser than his biographer, he is no lord of language. He is a master of paint: let that suffice. I have heard Sickert called "the best writer of living painters"; but a much better, it seems to me, is Vlaminck.

CLIVE BELL

LAZY LIFE

THERE appeared in some of the newspapers on Sunday an interesting paragraph:

> The man who for 25 years went to bed every year on November 1 and did not get up again until the spring, because cold gave him a stomach-ache, has died. He was Arthur Gehrke, a tavern-keeper at Watertown, Wisconsin.

As I read this—for it was a cold January morning—I could not help wondering whether or not I envied the Watertown tavern-keeper apart from his stomach-ache. "Even," I asked myself, "if he was a fraud and the pain winter gave him was not in the stomach but in the neck, would I like to imitate him and retire into a state of hibernation for three or, perhaps, four months in the year?" As one who has always been acutely conscious of the unpleasantness of getting up in the morning, I did not find the question immediately easy to answer. To lie in bed day after day, week after week, month after month, till the cold is past—if one had private means, one might well do worse with one's money. After all, to steal even an extra hour in bed in the morning is an admitted luxury. How much better to steal an extra month or a quarter of a year!

There are arguments on the other side, however. One has heard of several wise men who lay late in the morning; but one has never heard of a wise man who, being in good health, lay in bed for three months on end. There have been many prosecutions in England of men who persisted in lying in bed, and none of them was a Socrates. It is true that lying in bed is not a criminal offence, but the law finds a means of discouraging the lie-abed by accusing him of other things, such as neglecting his dwelling or his family through indolence. Thus an honest sluggard was some time ago charged with keeping his dwelling "in an untenantlike manner," and it was stated in evidence that "he had made a sundial of his bedroom wall so that he could lie in bed and tell the time." Obviously he was a man of some scientific curiosity—a disinterested student of the mystery of time, who wished to observe the hours as they passed without any selfish desire to know when it was time to get up. But the law pays little heed to a man's motives, and he had to pay as heavily for lying in bed as if he had manufactured a fraudulent food for children.

Many other cases of strong-willed men who take to their beds and refuse to leave them are on record. There was the stevedore, for example, who, though in the best of health, went to bed and remained there for a year, at the end of which he became ill and had to be carried off to hospital. At the inquest the coroner, rightly or wrongly, declared that he died of an affection of the lungs due to his being so long in bed. It is clear from this, at least, that the bed of the sluggard is not, as many think, a bed of roses—that the sluggard is a man who enthusiastically follows Nietzsche's advice to live dangerously. The perils of the pillow are not generally understood except by the moralists.

Even so, I do not commend the blanketed life of sloth. As I have said, no wise man has ever voluntarily lived it; and, apart from this, what can we think of a man who, in order to avoid the cold, stays in bed only for the winter? If the chief object in life is to avoid the cold, how many Easters and Whitsuntides and summer holidays one would have to spend in one's bedroom! The only way to be sure of avoiding the cold in England is to stay in one's bedroom all the year round, and even then draughts will come seeping in as in a railway compartment in which the windows are shut.

I am inclined to agree with Sir Max Beerbohm

that, if one lies long in bed, one should do this, not for the utilitarian purpose of avoiding bad weather, but for the aesthetic pleasure of enjoying a fine day. After all, a bedroom with the sun pouring through the windows is a place worth living and lying in. The song of the birds provides an accompaniment better than Mozart's to one's semi-thoughts. The leaves of the climbing roses make a charming pattern outside the window pane. The cheerful bustle of those who are up and about—the overheard greetings of those who pass outside—the whistling of a butcher's boy—the voices of children on their way back from school—all these conspire to induce in one a feeling of benevolence towards one's kind and to persuade one that the world is a very good place indeed. No draughts, no dismal skies seen from the pillow, remind one of the other side of reality.

Winter is, in comparison, a season in which to be active. There is, in fact, little else to do. A white quilt of snow, seen from a bedroom window, is a monotonous sight; but open the front door and tread on the crisp whiteness and breathe in the still air, pure as spring water, that has descended on the earth, and, however indolent you may be, you will find yourself setting inevitably forth on a brisk walk—perhaps a mile or more. Children, inspired by an activity like your own, are running about and throwing snowballs at each other or making a snowman. The sugared branches of the trees are as lovely as June flowers. And all the time, if you are a gardener, you reflect cheerfully at the back of your mind that this is doing your garden good. There is a modern prejudice against snow. People in the town say that snow is all right in the country, but that it is a nuisance, and a nuisance that turns into slush, in town. People in the country say that it is all right in town, where it never lies long, but that in the country it is a nuisance that makes the roads difficult and even impassable. The birds seem to agree with them, for how they resume singing when the thaw begins! Not being a bird, however, but a pedestrian with a range of a mile or so, I confess myself a snow-lover, an ice-lover, and a cold-day-lover—within limits.

Ice, like snow, rouses the activity of man. Let a pond be frozen over, and all the young of the neighbourhood will hasten to it in quest of speed like that of racehorses. The postman on his rounds will at sight of it throw his bicycle on the ground and set off on slide after slide as though time did not exist. Skates, forgotten for years, will suddenly appear on scores of feet, and young men will achieve something more like the joys of flight than can be achieved elsewhere on the surface of the earth. It is surely one of the greatest proofs of the invincible optimism of the English race that nearly every Englishman possesses a pair of skates. Disappointed year after year, he still looks forward to a Utopia of ice in which his skates will provide him with winged feet like Mercury's. Those of us who are old enough remember the great frost of 1896 as one of the golden intervals of the modern world. Then great lakes were frozen, and however badly we skated, we lived in a bliss of movement that lasted till midnight or beyond. It is no use pretending that the happiest hours we remember are hours of indolence.

Indolence, indeed—especially, perhaps, the indolence that takes the form of lying in bed—is unnatural to the majority of human beings. Even men who dislike work are as a rule what I should call early risers. I have known men who avoided work like the plague, but who, nevertheless, could not lie in bed after six in the morning. They could not endure the passive kind of idleness of the sluggard. They liked doing nothing, but they liked doing nothing actively—fussing, pottering about, wasting time on their feet rather than on their backs. Hence, I think that there is little danger that many people will imitate the bed-loving Watertown taverner even in an English January. We are born fussers. We may, some of us, lie in bed till lunch-time, but in the end the call to be up and doing affects us as it affects the still greater fussers who get up at six in the morning. Neither cold nor heat can deflect us from our purpose. For a part of the day, at least, we are doomed to be as busy as the busy bee or that still busier and fussier insect, the mosquito.

Y. Y.

THE MOVIES

"The Little Foxes," at the Gaumont.
"The Two-Faced Woman," at the Empire.
"Ferry Pilot," at the New Gallery and the Marble Arch.

The Little Foxes comes from a play of the same title. How good the play was I don't know, but the film, directed by William Wyler, is very good, and its merits seem to derive equally from the stage and the studio. The original drawing-room with three walls makes itself felt in the dialogue, the closing-in of situation, the relevance of each of the characters to events. It is a family drama, a trial of strength between two brothers and a sister, and behind the merchant respectability of their surroundings we soon sense the ruling passion—greed. To make a fortune in cotton (the scene is a small southern town in 1900), they are ready to sacrifice almost everything. They are the little foxes of the Song of Songs who spoil the vines; if they succeed, the way is open to a seamy romance of big business; failure will bring them toppling down with their teeth in one another's throats. The clash of wills reveals the strongest in Regina, who passively murders her invalid husband while the others have only tried to rob him, and she is left in an empty house watching her daughter walk away with a lover in the rain.

But *The Little Foxes* is not merely a good play of O'Neill timbre successfully photographed; the camera itself contributes enormously to this drama of rasping ambitions and family breakdown. The formal opening conversation at a dinner-table is given point as the lens sweeps round to discover a soapy smile, a concealed nudge, a movement of impatience among the diners; undercurrents that would be lost in a theatre are picked out and for a moment held; a vital scene is enacted by two men shaving back to back in a narrow bathroom; the camera enlarges, surprises, follows through shut doors, splits up a moment into its component parts. Selective realism has always been the trump card of film-making, and it is imposed here with striking effect on a realism of the theatre. Wyler, besides being a director with a mind of his own, has learnt important lessons from *Kane*. The linking of close-up with background, the minutiae of character and period, the hostile awareness of human individuality recall Welles's masterpiece. It is the unsympathetic counterpart of Chehov's realism, and the method requires good acting in the smallest detail of the smallest part. *The Little Foxes* has a fine cast headed by Miss Bette Davis, who gives her best and most terrifying performance as Regina, but others whose names are little known provide acting of similar quality. It is not, despite advertisement ("Bette Davis the way you like her best"), a fan-performance.

Garbo's new performance *is* chiefly for fans. A Martian visiting the Empire might wonder at the enthusiasm for an actress whose moods of weariness, austerity, distinction and self-parody make her appearance on skis or in a bathing-dress an event of importance. I feel pretty sure she doesn't fit into the brisk comedy played by Melvyn Douglas and Roland Young; but I am as Garbo-drugged as anyone, and *The Two-Faced Woman* amused me, and fascinated when it didn't amuse.

Ferry Pilot is the best documentary we have produced since *Target for To-night*. It tells us vividly and with touches of drama about an organisation of which most of us know nothing, it has its own intimacy and atmosphere of service, and the photographs of flying over England are the loveliest I have seen.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Richard III

Mr. Wolfit's performance of Richard III is a very distinguished affair. The part is scarcely less exacting than Hamlet or Lear, though it lacks both the subtlety and grandeur of Shakespeare's great tragic figures. Villainy for villainy's sake, orgiastic delight in murder, red hair and a limp—these are the material for a "character part," and occasionally Mr. Wolfit overbalanced and made us laugh when he should have given us gooseflesh. Few of the minor characters were more than second-rate: perhaps because of war exigencies the women showed up well in comparison with the men. Queen Margaret and Lady Anne are both difficult parts played with great spirit by Ann Chalkley and Rosalind Iden. Mr. Wolfit is also at his best in the two scenes in which women who have all the reason in the world to hate Richard, are yet won over by his smooth tongue and by the appeal of the throne. The revival of Richard III was worth the effort. Mr. Wolfit is this week appearing at the Strand as Hamlet from Jan. 20, with *The Merchant of Venice* to follow.

"Comus" at the New Theatre

Some of us may have had doubts about *The Wanderer* but there can be none about *Comus*, the most successful new ballet produced in years. This transformation of Milton's masque is lovely and expressive in itself and may prove important to the development of ballet. There are no discords, though there is innovation. Purcell's music, admirably chosen by Constant Lambert, Oliver Messel's gay costumes set in a seventeenth century landscape, and the choreographic invention of Robert Helpmann combine perfectly to embody Milton's theme. The inspiration of the original is never lost sight of. Miss Fonteyn in the part of the Lady not only dances as well as ever but captures exquisitely the trance-like mood; Helpmann's Comus capers and fascinates, half-prince, half-animal; and both performances are so near to Milton that the two speeches unexpectedly delivered by Helpmann, one in each of the two scenes, blend with the miming and raise the situation as nothing else could. The ballet would be infinitely poorer without them (Helpmann, by the way, speaks poetry excellently); and one sees how much the spoken word is capable of adding to music and dancing without discordance. There are other felicities in *Comus*: the rout with dancers wearing animal masks, Margaret Dale's Attendant Spirit, the vivid attitudes of the Brothers (John Hart and David Paltenghi). Its only weak point seemed, at the first performance, the final triumph of Chastity over Vice.

Miller's

It is remarkable but not surprising that the best exhibition of modern sculpture that we have seen since the war began is being given in a little gallery in Lewes. The explanation is, of course, the taste, intelligence and energy of the ladies who created and continue to direct this beneficent institution. By hook or by crook they have got together some thirty choice pieces—small for the most part, it goes without saying—by Maillol, Rodin, Henry Moore, Dobson, Epstein, Zadkine (the big wooden figure which the Tate refused as a gift and which is now in Major Wyndham's collection), Skeaping, Gaudier, Renoir, Degas and others. Maillol's bronze, lent by Sir Kenneth Clark, is probably the gem of the collection; but nothing is more agreeable than the by-products of the two great painters. Henry Moore's essay in concrete is noteworthy though not entirely successful. An early work by Gaudier (*The Dancers*) displays his prodigious gift, and reminds us once again how much we lost by his untimely death. Nothing in the gallery is negligible; everything is seen to advantage. Chiefly this is because the organisers have had the happy idea of showing the figures in front of textiles by two master-weavers, Rodier and Ethel Mairet. Never, in our recollection, has sculpture been better presented. For instance, Dobson's bust of Lopokova, backed by a magnificent crimson woven, reveals a grace and dignity hitherto unsuspected. May we seriously advise museum-officials and dealers to visit Miller's if only to study the art of presentation?

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Correspondence

REVENGE

SIR,—Nancy Cunard's poem "*France*" in the current issue of the *Statesman* . . . . Whether the very strong hate-motif is poetic license or not, such a flood of negative and destructive sentiment is surely not calculated to help matters, in the final analysis?

At the present stage of civilisation we profess to be men and women of reason and, as such, to recognise the necessity of self-control. But this poem reads like an uncontrolled orgy of hatred calculated to arouse all the very qualities which will effectively sabotage any attempt, now or later, to attain a just, calm, and reasonable reconstruction of the new world which some of us know to be already alive in the womb.

We've simply *got* to learn that the only possible antiseptic atmosphere in which the new world can ever come into being must be one of sacrificial tolerance all round: of service one to another that costs something (and here I'm not thinking of the eternal cash-nexus): of control (and control that, again, costs us something that hurts), that subordinates hate and revenge and releases the higher spiritual values—above all, love. Yes, I know humanity errs, goes terribly off the rails sometimes; but are our own individual lives without blemish?

Let us have justice by all means, but for heaven's sake let us keep our heads, as reasoning men, not animals, and be on our guard lest a welter of retribution—such as has led since 1918 to the present planetary death and destruction—again engulfs us and swamps all decency—and *this* time, probably for all time.

The very fact that France among others has suffered so literally and bitterly from domination and persecution is all the more reason for the exercise of control so that Frenchmen with tremendous spiritual effort may rise above hatred and by their sacrificial forgiveness both prove themselves men of something approaching divine stature and create the only possible basis for the new world-brotherhood. Tolerance and forgiveness are easy and noble theories when we are not being persecuted: when we are, they become extremely difficult practices and the only ones to wield lasting power for good. It's so easy just to let go and hate: so difficult to control, tolerate, forgive, and really rebuild. We must never again take, as we have hitherto taken, the comfortable, easy, complacent line of least resistance.

MICHAEL R. C. LAURIE

UNION NOW

SIR,—"United Nations" is a good phrase and expresses what most of us want; but it is not true. The 26 nations which signed the Pact at Washington are no more united than were the Allies in the last war or Britain and France at the beginning of this war. The government of each of those 26 nations is free to take separate decisions and to interpret what it has signed in whatever way suits it best. There is no reason to suppose that when the emergency which at present binds them is passed, they will remain together—bearing in mind that almost all of them are quite liable to drastic change when they again become answerable to their electorates.

It will not be until there is some centrally constituted authority with the right to take decisions on behalf of them all and having the power to enforce those decisions that they can truthfully call themselves united.

My object in writing is not to quibble about words. The point is that we have been doped by high-sounding words for too long and it is precisely because the words "United Nations" represent so much what we want and yet are inaccurate that they are so dangerous.

C. D. KIMBER

Federal Union News,
3, Gower Street, W.C.1.

SIR,—Perhaps one should not anticipate what Mr. Churchill is going to tell us when he reports to the House of Commons, but Mr. Eden's recent statement, "that the Government did not take the view that the present system was sacrosanct," leads one to hope that in the vital question of unification of war strategy a very definite step forward will be taken.

It is true that Mr. Eden was replying to a question about Dominion representation on an Empire war cabinet, a question which seems out-of-date when already the "invisible" frontier between Canada and the United States is being swept away, when Australia makes representations direct to Washington, and Africa swings towards independence (New Zealand asked for Imperial Federation at the Imperial Conference of 1911). Surely any supreme authority conceivable to-day must include representation of the United States and possibly of Russia, China and our other allies as well. The question is: what form can such an authority take?

Those who have suggested that the Allied War Command might be unified on the model of the British Commonwealth, where supreme authority rests in the Cabinet, in which the Dominions are not represented, may not be so eager when they realise that we are rapidly approaching a similar position of dependence upon Washington and New York to that of the Dominions upon Whitehall and London. An English-speaking Empire, with the President of the United States in supreme command, may not be a bad solution for the present—but what about the future?

As for such expedients as military alliances, co-ordinating committees, war councils, together with pacts, charters and solemn declarations, they have their places. The records of 1914-1918 and the capitulation of France give a realistic picture of their value in an emergency. Clarence Streit has already voiced America's fears.

Does not every major problem of war strategy resolve itself into this: How can we, with five big war zones, encircling the world, three main supply centres with exterior lines of communication and four supreme commands, along with a number of minor commands, attain unity and strength capable of superseding an enemy with unitary command and interior lines of communication? It is not a question of the aggregate of resources so much as the integration of effort.

May we not hope that Mr. Churchill will return to the spirit of his offer to France and propose a federation between the Allies, or between as many of the Allies as can accept federation on a democratic basis? Thus we could achieve unity of command, a closer bond with the Dominions and coordination in planning the peace. Unity in common interests with freedom for each in internal affairs.

16, Heathcroft, N.W.11. CYRIL MOORE

TRAINING CENTRE SCANDALS

SIR,—This letter summarises the unfortunate experiences of a number of refugees, all volunteers undergoing instruction at a big London training centre.

Two refugees passed their third (final) test after 12 weeks' training. The instruction-period is supposed to be 3 to 5 months. These qualified people were kept on, but nothing more was taught them. Mostly, the instructors left them to their own devices, despite protests from the men and women that, if they had to stay on, other processes be taught to them.

We believe, too, that there are too many instructors, and a swollen administrative staff. Park Royal Training Centre has four Placing Officers, yet trainees stay on for weeks after their third test, waiting to be found places. Sometimes they have been sent to factories as fitters, etc., only to be sent back with the remark, "We can't take you. We're not engaging aliens!" Yet the Centre knew we were not British.

With no further instruction after completion of training, we are kept on at the centre, with a weekly subsistence allowance. We may not ask at the Employment Exchange for work without presenting a card from the Centre. But this is given only on dismissal, the reason for which is given as "Training Ended. Unable to find you a job." Why don't the two co-operate?

One refugee, a married woman, chafing at her idleness, complained that after 5½ months at the bench she was still not sent to a job. "Why? Aren't you comfortable here?" was the cynical retort. "It so happens we don't want fitters at the

moment. *Why don't you take up nursing?*" The woman was so hurt by this that she all but burst into tears.

Another official at Park Royal said to a refugee who had asked when work was likely to be offered him, "You can't expect British workmen to work at the same bench as a German!"

One firm in Wembley rejected trainees sent from Park Royal with, "We've got one or two niggers here, but we don't take refugees!" After that Park Royal sent no more refugees there. Another refugee, after eight months at Park Royal, was dismissed as he could not be found a job. The very next day he applied to the local Employment Exchange and found at once a satisfactory post. Yet another, complaining of enforced inactivity at the Training Centre, was told, "After all, it isn't so bad here, getting £2 a week." The man retorted, "I am here to help win the war. *Ich pfeife* on your £2 a week!"

Posters are still on view at the Centre asking for craftsmen at various factories, but "only from natural-born British of British parents." Have we to face an "Aryan Paragraph" even in Britain? Why, this rule would bar even our respected Mr. Churchill from government work!

We say to the authorities, if we are suspicious, intern us. If we are permitted freedom, then trust us. Don't create in us such uncertainty and suspicion that we suspect hostility on every side. Help us to fight *our* battle!

As I speak not only for myself, I enclose my card, and sign myself, S.

London, N.W.

THIS FREEDOM

SIR,—The reminder by your correspondent Mr. H. Palmer that this is supposed to be a war for freedom, needs driving home. By handing over the Government of the country, for most practical purposes, to the Civil Service, not only has enormous wastage been occasioned in paper, patience, time, and man-power in the production, distribution, filling-up, checking and filing of masses of—for the most part—quite unnecessary forms; but numerous quite innocent actions have now become offences punishable by heavy fines or imprisonment.

I adduce three examples from the industry with which I happen to be connected.

Mr. A., a pharmaceutical chemist, has been in the habit, for years, in common with many of his confrères, of making up his own toilet preparations for sale in his shop. But now, if he has the temerity to sell £41 13s. 6d. worth in any one month, no matter how little he may have disposed of in the previous month, he is liable to suffer three months' imprisonment or to be fined £100.

Mr. A. would like to stock some of the toilet products made by Mr. B., because of their excellent quality. But if he does so, both Mr. A. and Mr. B. become liable to the same penalties, because, like so many small-scale manufacturers, Mr. B. has failed to persuade the Board of Trade to grant him the necessary licence to engage in wholesale trade. Like Mr. A., he is obliged to sell his wares by retail only, although he has no shop to enable him to do this.

Miss C. runs a hairdressing and beauty salon near Mr. A.'s shop. She used to get some of the preparations used in her business from Mr. A., who made them for her. She may no longer do this. If Mr. A. knowingly supplies her with his preparations to be used in her business, both Mr. A. and Miss C. become liable to imprisonment or fining. She can buy Mr. A.'s preparations to use on her own face or hair, but not on her clients.

If the officials responsible for drafting the recent Order which has the above consequences imagine that thereby they are facilitating winning the war, I suggest they are not far short of lunacy.

No doubt other readers could supply you with particulars of equally insensate orders affecting other industries; and not the least serious consequence is the wastage of public money and man-power expended in efforts to enforce these new restrictions on freedom.

H. STANLEY REDGROVE, B.Sc., F.I.C., F.C.S.,
Member Society of Public Analysts.
The Thatched Cottage, Oxford Road, Pangbourne.

OIL

SIR,—Your obviously well-informed writer "X" does not tell us as much as he might of the sinister hold of the Oil Combine (now Petroleum Board) on the retailer. Not only has the Combine a complete monopoly, but in its role as Petroleum Board it has its inspectors keeping a watchful eye on garages, going through their books, records, etc., and generally getting complete knowledge of its distributors' affairs. The Exclusive Buying Rebate only operated before the war but the Combine still keeps a tight grip on the supply to commercial customers and does its best to get that trade away from the retailer. Despite the war the commercial consumer still buys at a much cheaper rate than the trade and although there is a shortage of man power the Combine still has travellers touting for business, specially in lubricating oils.

It is a pity "X" did not deal with the mysteries of oil finance in wartime. Who fixes the "world price" of petroleum and what profit is the Government allowing the Companies on top of that price? Uncontrolled monopoly, heavy profits, no risks and after war competition limited by special agreement. Was there ever a stronger case for socialisation?

OIL MAN

SOVIET PROPAGANDA

SIR,—Out of 27 messages from Soviet scientists and others to British people, in a booklet I have just received from Moscow, 21 refer to Fascism or Fascists as the enemy; expressions such as "Hitlerite Germany" also being used. None accuse the German people as a whole. Several write of the German people being set free by an Allied victory.

Stonehouse, Glos. HUGH P. VOWLES

SIR,—Are not both Mr. Garry and Mr. Rothstein (who refer to me in their letters to you) taking rather too rigid a view of Soviet propaganda and official Soviet utterances regarding the distinction between "Germans" and "Hitlerites?" The distinction still exists, though in an increasingly vague way, but the distinction between "Hitlerites" and "the German Army" has practically vanished. Without looking very far for an illustration of this, may I refer you to an article by Ilya Ehrenburg, one of the most distinguished of Soviet journalists, in this week's *The New Statesman and Nation?* Speaking of the German invaders and their crimes, he uses the words "Germany," "Germans," and "German" eleven times, and the words "Nazi" or "Hitlerite" not once. Ehrenburg reflects the feelings of the Soviet people, who are not to-day in a hair-splitting mood. "Germany," he says, "will not easily give up her mad dream" (of world domination). "Germany," mind you, not "Hitler!" I deal more fully with this significant evolution in a forthcoming book on my war-time experiences in the Soviet Union

London, E.C.4. ALEXANDER WERTH

THE NAZI ANIMAL

SIR,—First Mr. Eden tells us that we are at war because the Nazi animal wouldn't stay at home. Then he alters this and says it's because he *couldn't*.

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JONATHAN CAPE

BOOKS IN GENERAL

I HAVE an odd, frivolous taste for the biographies of Victorian ecclesiastics. Presumably everyone requires some light reading, and such books, I find, are as exciting as Mrs. Christie's or Mr. Nicholas Blake's, vastly more amusing than Mr. Wodehouse's. With great enjoyment, therefore, I have lately been reading Canon Macdonnell's Life of Archbishop Magee. I cannot recommend this except to the very few who share my taste, yet these two volumes, issued in 1896 by a publisher called Isbister, do shed some light on human nature and particularly on *Homo Victoriensis*. Magee was, I think, the ablest as he was certainly the most eloquent of Victorian bishops. Witty, unbuttoned, and uncommonly good company, he was highly popular except with bigots. Born in 1821, the son of an Irish clergyman and the grandson of an Irish archbishop, he took Holy Orders as it were by inheritance. To-day a higher view is taken of the priestly office, and moreover the Church offers fewer and much smaller prizes, so that a particular vocation is needed to make a brilliant man into a parson. In those days it was common for clever and ambitious young men to enter an ecclesiastical career. Magee was absolutely solid in his faith, but he had the temperament of a barrister or a politician rather than of a priest. An Evangelical complained that a sermon of his "had not Gospel enough in it to save a tom-tit," and on the other hand his Irish upbringing deprived him of all sympathy with the Puseyites. (There is a comically obtuse letter from him to a clergyman harassed by a young lady who wanted to make him her confessor.) He was similarly opposed to the extreme views alike of the Higher Critics and the literalists. Whatever discrepancies and apparent contradictions there might be in Holy Scripture, he concluded, were there by God's special providence. They served as discipline to the faith of the humble, and as stumbling blocks to the proud, and it was therefore good for us that they should exist. . . . With such ingenuity at his command he was bound to prosper.

From 1849 to 1860 he served as a curate at Bath, and his preaching gained a wide reputation. In 1859 he was offered a living, which he refused, "after a mental struggle, the sorest I have ever gone through, and which leaves me at this moment so physically and mentally prostrate that I can hardly bring myself to write at length all those reasonings which brought me to my conclusion." (The living was in the wildest part of Donegal.) Six months later he was offered Quebec Chapel in London: "Oh, how I shrink from the anxiety and responsibility of the coming decision. We must pray earnestly for guidance and help." He was guided to accept. (It was "confessedly the most prominent and important post for a preacher in London.") But his health failed him, and soon he accepted the rectory of Enniskillen. In 1864 he was made Dean of Cork. Four years later his growing impatience with the narrowness of his Church of Ireland colleagues induced him to apply to Disraeli for an English living. "Very reverend Sir," the answer came, "I regret that I cannot comply with your request, for I felt it my duty"—Magee gloomily turned over the page—"to recommend her Majesty to nominate you to the vacant see of Peterborough." As usual a letter confided to a friend his feelings: "I could not have imagined beforehand how much of dismay and actual pain the reception of a Prime Minister's offer of a bishopric would cause." He overcame his dismay. Finally, in 1891, Lord Salisbury offered him the Archbishopric of York: "You may imagine how *dazed* I felt by such an offer, accompanied by a request for a 'yes' or 'no' by telegram. . . . It was a tremendous decision to make at a few hours' notice. . . . After such prayer and consultation as I could give, I telegraphed 'yes.'" Magee was not physically strong, and one would accept all these hesitations more readily were it not for an incident in 1864. The Bishop of Meath was dying. Magee expected to succeed him, but suddenly the Government fell. "The Bishopric of Meath would, I believe, have been mine had Dr. Singer's death taken place just three weeks sooner than it did. Three weeks of an expiring, and seemingly useless, life lay between me and all that the bishopric implies." One has an uneasy feeling that if the seemingly useless life had not been thus prolonged, we should have had a letter telling us of the dismay, the pain, the consultations, the prayers, the sore mental struggle, that had been necessary before the bishopric could be accepted.

"What an eternal thing is humbug!" as Magee was once driven to declare. But his own attitude to preferment is interesting just because he was not a common humbug. He was a good, nice and sensible man with a powerful intellect. Indeed, he shocked his contemporaries by his unconventionality and candour. In nineteenth century England the power of man to deceive himself about his sentiments seems to have been slightly abnormal. Politicians, no less than ecclesiastics, wrestled upon their knees for hours before accepting the posts for which they had been tirelessly intriguing. Mr. Gladstone, whom I fervently admire, was genuinely persuaded that he longed to retire from politics, and that he continued till the age of eighty-three in the vexatious exercise of power only because he was indispensable to his fellow citizens. Our motives, like our faults, are more easily concealed from ourselves than from our friends. Moreover, when conventions require a man to feel a particular emotion, he manages, I believe, as a rule to feel it genuinely, for our sentiments are more at our command than is generally supposed. And Victorian convention demanded a number of particular emotions. In the latter part of the eighteenth century tears were always on tap—Chatham and Pitt, for instance, habitually wept. The Victorians were similarly gifted with sincere misgivings.

The other point about Magee that fascinates me is his altruistic gloom. He had a rare capacity for enjoyment, and his career was a series of triumphs, but he was in constant distress; the country, he felt sure, was going to the dogs. He began his tenure of the see of Peterborough, which lasted twenty-two years, with a speech in the Lords denouncing the calamitous disestablishment of the Church of Ireland. Lord Derby, himself a great veteran of oratory, declared that in his experience the eloquence of this speech had never been surpassed and very rarely equalled. Henceforward the bishops were always pushing Magee forward to advocate their more unpopular opinions, till he complained that he was "the gamecock of the Episcopal Bench." (The other peers, he said, treated the bishops as parvenus.) He made a brave attack on a bill for suppressing vivisection, and another upon a bill for introducing the form of tyranny euphemistically called "Local Option." "I think it better," he said, "that England should be free than compulsorily sober," and there were yelps from every fanatic in the three kingdoms. Increasingly he became a prey to the gloomiest forebodings. Archbishop Tait, he wailed, was an infatuated Erastian; anti-clericalism was spreading in the Universities; the clergy were more and more taken up with "ritualistic gewgaws"; Mr. Gladstone, though totally unfitted to rule, had obtained another majority; our democracy was ignorant, feeble and selfish beyond all other democracies; and dissenters were demanding that the bells of the Established Church should toll at their funerals. "The England of thirty years hence," he wrote in 1878, "will surely be the nastiest residence conceivable for anyone, save infidel prigs and unsexed women." The House elected in 1886, he declared, was Republican: "I give the Church of England two parliaments to live through." And then all this talk of Socialism! Christ had said "My Kingdom is not of this world"; it was therefore a huge mistake to turn the kingdoms of this world into His Kingdom. Disestablishment would be followed by revolution, and he only hoped he might be spared to spend his few surviving disestablished years on the Lake of Como.

The groans of nineteenth-century notabilities now seem ironically amusing. The Paris of the Eighties and Nineties provided for the privileged the most agreeable and stimulating life, I think, that has ever been obtainable upon this planet; yet Flaubert and the Goncourts never ceased whining. They, it is true, had seen a humiliating defeat and an alarming revolution. But the English knew an ever-growing prosperity, and how incessant were their complaints. The disestablishment of the Church of Ireland was, in fact, the harmless and overdue abolition of an insolent anomaly; the spread of ritualism produced—to put it at its lowest—an immense amount of innocent pleasure; even the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill would have legalised only marriages that were permitted throughout Catholic Europe. If Bishop Magee found all this so agitating, what, one may ask, would be his feelings if he had been born sixty years later and saw what we are seeing? (There are moments, I notice, when one longs to drop bombs not on, but near, almost all the eminent Victorians.) I fancy that Bishop Magee, if he were now alive, would indeed be gloomy, but not a whit gloomier than he actually was. Reasons for dismay may have become more cogent, but the causes of dismay remain the same—for most of them are usually subjective. Groaning over the indisputably horrible present, alarmed by the potentially more horrible future, we may envy what we imagine to have been the placid lives of our grandparents. But their anxiety, it seems, was hardly less harrowing than ours. Moreover, compared with the immense majority of our fellow Europeans, compared even with ourselves eighteen months ago, we, too, are in fact very enviable. We have the right to be amused by the lamentations of a Magee, but are we not also a little ridiculous if we indulge in self-pity? It is at any rate a satisfaction to draw from the life of so great a preacher something resembling a moral lesson.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

NEW NOVELS

They Die with their Boots Clean. By GERALD KERSH. *Heinemann.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The Fort. By STORM JAMESON. *Cassell.* 6*s.*

English Story. Edited by E. W. & SUSAN WYATT. *Collins.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

You Can't be Too Careful. By H. G. WELLS. *Secker and Warburg.* 9*s.*

The war has been adequately documented and journalised in its progress, but it has to be continuously inhabited by the imagination—it has as it were to become the permanent address of the writer's spirit—before its particular images and attitudes can acquire the contextual richness which produces a characteristic literature. Fresh raw material is vastly preferable to the renovated junk and salvage of yesterday's creation, but it can be too raw. Such war literature as I have yet seen is the work of essentially civilian writers who

have become involved in an unsought deviation from the normal.

This will change, if it is not already doing so, and Gerald Kersh provides an impressive straw in the new wind. *They Die with their Boots Clean* is less a straight novel than an evocation of the spirit of the guardsman. It is not written out of disgust at the soldier's lot, nor does it glamourise a Hollywood Hussar pouring out the sawdust of a phoney life *pro patria*. It witnesses to the delight of a not insensitive mind in discipline in regimental tradition, in comradeship, in the astringent comedy and the narrow pride of men who travel light and live hard. The characters in the story, for all the vividness of their portrayal, are not so much individuals as aspects, local variants, of an archetypal Guardsman in whose image they are moulded. Frequently they even speak in the same voice, a remarkably racy and almost rhapsodic idiom which I imagine owes something to Mr. Kersh's invention. This is not the Brave New World we were led to expect, but it is certainly braver and in some ways newer than the original prescription: newer, that is, in the sense of being more unexpected. The almost ecstatic hymning of race and blood, the celebration of combat and professional soldierliness, the devotion to the rigour of the barrack and to what I can only describe as an emotional frugality—these things seemed to pass their prime with the Crimean War, to fade out in the Boer War, finally to linger as the merest nostalgia in the sentimental pastiche of Mr. Tod Slaughter. Mr. Kersh is one of the first writers to give a positive content (as distinct from those who only suffer with stubborn passivity) to the national re-birth glibly assumed by politicians. Not as a debatable argument, but as a new imaginative crystallisation (to be argued *about*, if you like), *They Die with their Boots Clean* is the most original and distinguished contribution to the literature of this war that I have read.

Storm Jameson always seems to me a very likeable writer—intelligent, capable and generous. Those of her books that have come my way belong to a category midway between socio-political documentary and the novel proper: that is to say, a preoccupation with current opinions and events is skilfully linked with rounded individual portraits. Miss Jameson's is not a profound mind, but she has sufficient sensibility and discrimination to be well worth reading. *The Fort* is a short book, in which scene and event are reduced to little more than the stage-directions of a dialogue between English, French and German soldiers, isolated from their units during the French collapse. It is a dialogue about the war they are fighting and about war in general. The interplay of national philosophies and idiosyncrasies of character is handled with a nice touch; the dialogue is infused with candour and eloquence; but as the book proceeds, the argument loses momentum, and a half-hearted traffic with the ghosts of Last Time eviscerates the conclusion.

English Story brought the blood to my eyes with the claim that its contributors are "the best contemporary short-story writers." This is a pretty cool disregard of Prichett, Plomer, Graham Greene, Elizabeth Bowen and all the Irish writers—to go no farther than the most blatant omissions. However, if the publishers will be content with "the best selection for many years of completely new or little known authors" I will make them a present of the description. Apart from the incongruous presence of James Hanley and Dorothy Richardson, *English Story* is not unlike a hidden talent contest. Some of its contributors have scarcely appeared in print before; many of them are in their early twenties: the consistently high standard is therefore a real editorial achievement. I particularly like the work of Dorothy K. Haynes and Joyce Chadwick; the stories of Kenneth Gee and A. E. Edwards are developed admirably but go lame at the finish; and A. Edwards Richards, with a subject about as fresh and unsentimental as *Danny Boy*, shows again what an attractive idiom Welsh can be. The continued influence of Katherine Mansfield is interesting: so is the encroaching shadow of the war, in many different shapes. No one contributor stands out, but the general level of talent is encouraging. The independent policy of the editors is well justified by this selection (which incidentally is their second). They are breaking new ground which looks to be worth cultivating, and they should find a growing audience for future issues of *English Story*.

You Can't be too Careful is a better novel than some Mr. Wells has published in recent years. Its central character is a Little Man from the back row of the black-coated brigade, who inherits a sufficiency, lives in a mean and bungling way, and is restored to some kind of manhood by his adventures in Civil Defence. More particularly Edward Albert Tewler represents the human recalcitrance which hinders Mr. Wells's attempts to make a land fit for *Homo Sapiens* to live in. More simply still one might describe Tewler as an embodiment of Original Sin, but that would doubtless inflame Mr. Wells's unflagging anti-clericalism. "No Popery!" is still a cry that brings Mr. Wells to his feet, more even than "the destruction of Hitlerism," for he denounces the Roman Catholic Church as "the most evil thing in the whole world" (adding the curious information that it is "the most natural religion possible" and that it prevails in Japan!). Mr. Wells's constant enemy is the middleman, the treacherous *clerc*; for his overthrow Mr. Wells appeals to a "proteus of insubordination" (which might be "Dissent" writ modern) and to the power of radio and gramophone to hurl a mixture of Toscanini and scientific encyclopaedias into the pristine ear-drums of massed Tewlers, without infection from professional teachers, lecturers, scribes and pharisees; though this latter panacea is perhaps a sort of leg-pull devised in a moment of professional jealousy.

The best part of Mr. Wells's talent is his flair for seedy characters and dingy circumstances. He lacks Dickens's genius for the sublimely grotesque, and what is more serious he lacks the blended anger and tenderness which Dickens commanded: too many Wellsian characters are invented in order to be meanly belittled, for nothing but the greater glory of their creator in his other role of intellectual pundit. Pamphleteers are made that way, but not novelists. However, connoisseurs of the Wellsian tract will find *You Can't be too Careful* as sprightly as ever, and that at least is not to be sneezed at.

DESMOND HAWKINS

LA DÉBACLE

A Thousand Shall Fall. By HANS HABE. *Harrap.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Before the war Herr Habe was known to English readers as one of the younger refugee writers from Central Europe and, in particular, as the author of an exciting but immature novel which described an escape from Czechoslovakia. There was something over-strained about a good many of the refugee novels of that period; they were much alike and they telescope indistinguishably in the memory. One had the impression of reading case-histories. But now the struggle against Nazism has come into the open, the sense of private strain has gone. One has moved from the private intensity of the case to the freer if more horrible spaces of tragedy, and Herr Habe's latest book shows the measure of the change. He has written the story of his own bitter role in the service of the French Army at the time of the collapse, and of his haunted life as a prisoner of

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war at Nancy; but the book is more than that. It is, I think, the most sensitive and suggestive, the most deeply felt, actual and remorseless picture of the collapse of an army that this war has produced. It takes one's mind back to the kind of thing Maupassant did in the early pages of *Boule de Suif*, and its prison pages have something of that Hungarian masterpiece of the last war, *Black Monastery*.

When war broke out, Herr Habe joined the 21st Regiment of Volunteers, and in May 1940 they were up in Alsace waiting for the war to begin. They had orders to advance to what was still called "the line." Burdened with loads which the modern German Army had disposed of—that part of the soldier's equipment followed the German infantry by car, so that they arrived fresh at the front—the regiment first of all moved forward into what seemed like the emptiness and silence of space itself. Then they met the retreat and again moved forward to become not so much a rearguard as a lost army. How lost they were they did not realise until they saw the German tanks before them preparing to assault quite openly, and the German staff themselves spreading their maps and putting up their instruments, as if Habe's men were a military joke. This, in fact, they were. No one was behind them; above all there was no artillery, and in the sky no aeroplanes. Arriving worn out and hungry at the front, after days of marching, they found there was no front and had with double bitterness and weariness to return. The collapse, as Habe saw it, was not so much psychological as physical.

The psychological collapse was elsewhere. They met its infection like a fever or the smell of decay. Among the Volunteers there was the inevitable fifth columnist, with his sudden disappearances, his way of getting lost at critical moments and turning up again unexpectedly with a new crop of rumours. The rot had started in the demoralising Sitzkrieg, where the outposts had been lapping up the champagne; the out-of-date Remington rifles, the lack of maps among the staff, the bewilderment among the older officers who had fought in the last war, were random symptoms. Saint Brice, the lieutenant of the Volunteers, said to Sergt. Habe, as the truth dawned on them, that the generals who sabotaged the war were not traitors:

> They are the only honest men. They at least admit that in this ideological war they are on the other side. Why shouldn't they? These aren't two nations fighting. We are the dishonest ones. We are afraid to say: Yes, we are dying for an idea. This time we were proud that we didn't march off to war singing. But you don't win a war without singing. It's not a question of a few cannon more or less.

Still, it was. Even as Saint Brice spoke on that road, there were no motor vehicles, no tractors in the packed retreat. There were only horses, panicking under the Stukas and careering with their wagons and guns in hopeless disorganisation into the woods. To the Volunteers, who in fact still maintained discipline, the retreat was a passage out of one dream into another. They passed, in this hot summer weather, from the half-blasted and deserted towns into the untouched countryside. At an inn, after a sudden air raid, soldiers crawled shamefacedly from under the tables to see the peasants sitting in their chairs unmoved. At some places the women reviled the soldiers; at others said: "It is not your fault. We understand." The low-water mark was reached at Ligny-en-Barrois. This was the champagne country, a train of cognac and champagne was being looted at the station. The tracks were strewn with broken bottles. Officers and men were drunk side by side. One lot were playing ninepins with the bottles. The orgy at Ligny continued in all the towns beyond it:

> Thousands of soldiers hobbled along the highways, and out of their pockets hung bottles, women's shoes, neckties, ribbons, ties. A negro soldier was carrying three or four pairs of women's corsets. The ribbons hung down and twisted round his legs. Baby carriages rolled along, bearing champagne, cognac, shirts, clocks, umbrellas, coffee mills.

Some of the Arabs had put on women's hats. Half this loot would be discarded before the next town. Once the cars drove through a mire of discarded cheese, Port Salut and Roquefort.

For the German or Austrian anti-Nazis, like Habe, the prospect of becoming prisoners of war was a haunting terror. Habe himself saw no escape. Eventually, when he had given up all hope, a young Frenchman gave him his identity disc and some of his personal letters from his mother, so that Habe could pass as French when he was taken prisoner. This trick worked, and, faking a Swiss German accent, Habe took the risk of being an interpreter in the prisoner camp. This is the most exciting part of the book, and also the most interesting, for it gives a curious picture of the Nazis at close quarters. It was not a situation in which the Germans would naturally behave well. They, too, were mad and stupid. They were out for loot, and with the ridiculous if dangerous nastiness of commercial travellers who have been told of a good thing. Their propaganda drove them one moment to maltreat the negro prisoners appallingly, and the next to treat them with the greatest indulgence. In the end Habe owed his escape to the corruptibility of the conquerors. How mad they were may be indicated by the fact that French shopkeepers in Nancy had to separate German officers fighting over the possession of a few yards of silk. The cruelties of the Germans sprang from their vainglory, and this was also their vulnerable point. The Gestapo especially were gullible when their conceit was astutely tapped. The most horrible thing the Germans did was probably not premeditated. The weather was hot. They undressed. One saw the spectacle of half-naked conquerors, like so many animals, lording it over the fully dressed population. It was like the disrobing of the Roman before the slave. There was an accidental but revolting symbolism about this spectacle.

Herr Habe's method is like that of the novelist. The book is packed with small scenes, conversation and innumerable sharp little portraits, and moves swiftly without an excess of words. An imagination, a sympathy and a pity have worked upon material which a straight report would have left bare. He finally got away with the help of a brothel-keeper and some of the girls in the place. His ingenuity, his daring and his luck were extraordinary. Only one Nazi recognised him in the camp, and he, instead of betraying him, sent him an anonymous warning. Occasionally a theatrical touch, an echo from Herr Habe's earlier work, comes into the narrative, but in general it is objective. It is the work of a mature conscience and a choking heart. One is left emotionally blasted, and wondering whether we yet understand in England how profoundly this is a war of ideas and what, in social terms, that sentence means.

V. S. PRITCHETT

CHURCH AND STATE

Church and State in Fascist Italy. By D. A. BINCHY. *Oxford University Press.* 31s. 6d.

This work performs an international service. It is important to Catholics, to students of religious history, and to all exposed to the impact of Fascism; between them a considerable section of humanity. Nobody would call it light reading. Professor Binchy uses the correct and learned style proper to a legal savant writing about the Papacy, which makes one the more grateful for frequently witty and occasionally

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Company Meeting

LLOYDS BANK LIMITED

THE annual general meeting of Lloyds Bank Limited will be held on 30th January, 1942, at 71, Lombard Street, London, E.C.

The address of the Chairman of the Bank, The Rt. Hon. Lord Wardington, which would normally have been delivered at the Annual General Meeting was, as last year, posted to the shareholders with the Annual Report and Balance Sheet on 22nd January in order to shorten the business of the meeting.

In his address Lord Wardington stated :

PROFITS AND BALANCE SHEET.

The net profit brought in, after making all necessary and proper provisions, is £1,274,199, a decrease of £109,608. We have had much larger resources at our disposal during the year, but a substantial proportion of them continue to be employed at a low rate of interest, whilst our overdrafts, which earn a higher yield, have continued to shrink, and our expenses, particularly our salary bill, have again largely increased. Our published figure of profits enables us to recommend the same dividend as last year and to put on one side £350,000 against any contingency, and at the same time to increase slightly the amount carried forward.

The salient points of our Balance Sheet are that during the year we have lent £95,000,000 more to the Government—£65,000,000 on Treasury Bills and Treasury Deposit Receipts and £30,000,000 in further investments in National War Bonds. These increased assets, after allowing for the further shrinkage of £12,000,000 in our Overdrafts, find their counterpart on the liability side of our Balance Sheet in the greatly increased total of Current, Deposit and other Accounts, which stand at the record figure of £581,000,000. These, quite briefly, constitute the principal changes in our figures during the past year.

The figures of our own bank are typical of the figures of the other great clearing banks of this country.

	Deposits (in millions)	Increase for Year	Percentage to Deposits		
			Liquid Assets	Investments	Overdrafts
June, 1939 ...	396		30%	27%	42%
Dec., 1939 ...	434	+9.6%	39%	25%	37%
Dec., 1940 ...	491	+13.1%	43%	28%	29%
Dec., 1941 ...	581	+18.3%	50%	28%	22%
Dec., 1914 ...	118		41%	14%	50%
Dec., 1915 ...	131	+11.0%	29%	33%	42%
Dec., 1916 ...	152	+16.0%	30%	27%	37%

In our last half-yearly Balance Sheet before the outbreak of the present war, Lloyds Bank showed a total of Current, Deposit and other Accounts amounting to £396,000,000. This was employed as to 10 per cent. in keeping our traditional cash reserve, and as to another 10 per cent. in bills, mainly Treasury Bills, which, with the 7 per cent. lent out as money at call and short notice, and other items, made up a little more than the 30 per cent. of liquid assets at which we aimed.

THE NECESSITY OF SAVING.

I would like to add my testimony to the paramount necessity of saving everything possible and of refraining from entering into the harmful competition of trying to buy consumable goods, the quality of which is limited and the price of which tends to increase with every fresh competition to buy, while the effect is to diminish the purchasing power of the pound. If, however, the pounds are saved, purchasing power will be maintained and after the war, when we are again producing consumable goods instead of weapons of war, we may hope to be in a position to buy what we want at a less cost than would otherwise be possible. As long as the balance is left in the books of the bank at the disposal of the depositor, the temptation and power to draw it out and spend it always remain.

CONVERSION OF " B " SHARES INTO STOCK.

We have decided to recommend the conversion of our issued " B " Shares into Stock and to dispense, in the case of both " A " and " B " Shares, with the provision under Article 46 of our Articles of Association requiring seven days' notice to be given of any proposed transfer. We are unable to convert our " A " Shares as they are not fully paid.

Company Meeting

MARTINS BANK

TAX INCIDENCE ON EARNINGS

BUSINESS AND TURNOVER ACTIVE

MR. FREDERIC ALAN BATES, chairman, has issued a statement to shareholders of Martins Bank Limited, in place of the address he would normally give at the 111th annual meeting of the Bank on January 27th, in which he says :

Profits are now shown after deduction of tax on dividends. The change does not affect the final result, but shows more clearly the incidence of taxation on earnings. The net profit for 1941 is £587,248, against a net profit for 1940 (adjusted to the basis now adopted) of £641,427, but the decrease is more than accounted for by taxation.

The amount brought forward from last year is £347,771, which with the profit of £587,248 makes £935,019 available for distribution. An interim dividend of 7½ per cent. was paid in July. It is proposed to pay a final dividend for 1941 at the same rate, making 15 per cent. for the year. The two dividends will take £312,003 net after deducting tax. There has been transferred to staff pension fund £100,000, and with uncertain times in mind a further sum of £150,000 has been placed to reserve for future contingencies, leaving £373,016 to be carried forward.

Deposits have risen during the year by £34,290,000 to £157,600,000, due to heavy Government expenditure on war production. Investments (a high proportion in short term securities) have increased by £13,480,000 and now stand at £58,940,000. Treasury deposit receipts of £28,000,000 are held, as against £9,000,000 last year.

Advances have decreased by some £5,600,000, due to contraction in business not considered essential to the prosecution of the war. In all essential industries the Bank is very ready to help, and adopts a generous attitude to applications for advances to customers engaged upon war work. Business and turnover continue to be very active.

Cash in hand and at the Bank of England stands at £17,621,000 ; quick assets, comprising cash, money at call, balances with other banks, Treasury and other bills and Treasury deposits receipts being £66,351,000, that is 41.96 per cent. of deposits.

I have confined my observations to the domestic affairs of the Bank, the sound position of which fully justifies optimism in the outlook for the new year. While serious thought is needed in considering the future of the country's trade after the war, it should be clear to all that the nation's life in its various aspects, industrial, commercial and social, must be solely directed for the present to the one aim of a concentrated effort to win the war in the shortest time possible. The year that has just closed brought many anxieties to the nation, but also much for which to be thankful, and there are sure grounds for firm confidence in victory.

Company Meeting

NATIONAL PROVINCIAL BANK LIMITED

Statement by the Chairman,

COLIN FREDERICK CAMPBELL, ESQ.

IN view of the continuance of conditions which prompted me to circulate my observations with the Report and Balance Sheet last year, I am taking a similar course this year.

The proceedings at the 109th Annual General Meeting on the 29th January, 1942, will be confined to the necessary business to be transacted.

With the general rise in incomes, the field open to banking activities has been greatly extended. There are many who are beginning to appreciate the services offered by the Joint Stock Banks which are unsurpassed in any other country in the world. I take this opportunity of assuring those who perhaps have only recently been possessed of money incomes beyond their immediate needs that the Banks will gladly undertake the safe custody of their holdings of cash, attend to their purchases of War Savings Certificates, and in general offer them a complete Banking Service.

THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS.

Deposits show an increase of £85,000,000.

Cash, Treasury Deposit Receipts and Investments show increases respectively of £9,000,000, £79,000,000 and £23,000,000.

There is a tendency to interpret swollen figures as an indication of greater national prosperity. As far as banking is concerned, I can assure you this is not the case. Our gross revenue from Treasury Deposit Receipts and Investments has shown a sharp rise, but this has been partly offset by reduced income from Bills Discounted and particularly from our main source of revenue, viz., Advances. Loss of income under these heads, together with the rising expense of supplies and overheads and the cost of the additional Deposits, have, to a great extent, counter-balanced the increased income from Government securities.

When all factors are taken into consideration, I think we may regard the results of the year's work, which shows a net profit of £1,057,783, as satisfactory.

After payment of dividend at the rate of 15 per cent. per annum, and after allocations of £100,000 to Bank Premises Account, £150,000 to Pension Fund, and a special £100,000 to War Contingencies Fund, the amount carried forward is £543,113.

In the Report the dividend declared is stated net, *i.e.*, less Income Tax ; this represents the actual Cash Payments to shareholders. In former years dividends have been stated gross. The effect of this change is that the Income Tax recoverable by deduction from the dividends has now been charged before arriving at the Profit shown by the Account.

Although the rate of Dividend declared is expressed as at the rate of 15 per cent. per annum on the Paid-up Capital of the Bank, it should be realised that the Shareholders' interest in the Bank is a much larger sum than this item. Were the Dividend expressed in relation to the Paid-up Capital the Reserve and Internal Funds accumulated in past years, the rate would be a very moderate one.

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malicious asides. Also the book is inevitably occupied with much theological argumentation, and, lest the thread be lost, the mind must follow this as closely as Euclidean logic. In this relation its only grave defect occurs — one which the author should supply in future editions. Certain essential documents are missing: the Lateran Treaty, the Concordat with Italy, the Encyclical *Non Abbiamo Bisogno*. Professor Binchy cannot expect the reader to have the *Codice Ecclesiastico* at hand. He quotes odd passages, but failing at least a summary of these texts the reader is forced to guess, is miserably conscious he is guessing wrong, and suffers acute mental torment. Historians should recite to themselves every morning: "A paragraph of quotation is worth a chapter of commentary." Having registered this grievance, I turn with relief to appreciation.

The length of this book is entirely in its favour. The breach between Italy of the Risorgimento and the Papacy, the strange half-century when the Vatican and the Italian Government had no public dealings with one another, although in practice they devised mutual accommodation, the negotiations between Pius XI and Mussolini, the momentary fusion of the Lateran Treaties; and the subsequent conflict, compromise and partial absorption—all that story would be bleak, even incomprehensible, in outline. In detail an enthralling drama is furnished by the twists and turns of two forces interacting, the impact of the rocklike Pope and the indomitable Dictator, the subtlety of an ancient hieratic bureaucracy fencing with the subtlety of a young opportunist regime. The setting of the play is perfect; Rome itself, a city qualitatively rather than quantitatively great, and within it the tiny City of the Vatican, of which its first sovereign said: "We are glad to see the earthly territory reduced to such minute proportions that it, too, can and should be regarded as being spiritualised by the immense, lofty and divine spirituality which it is destined to support and serve." And focused thus in time and place is the age-long controversy of Church and State, renewed with portentous vehemence. Behind Mussolini looms the new paganism, the claim of the State to possess its subjects body and soul; behind the Popes rises "rank on rank, the army of unalterable Law." So Professor Binchy sees it; as an orthodox Catholic he makes no pretence of hypocritical impartiality. Fascism to him is a menace to Christianity, and some of its exponents, Farinacci in especial, evil incarnate; though he likes Mussolini's Catholic brother, Arnaldo.

The Lateran Treaties of 1929 were thus the offspring of a marriage of mixed motives. The Papacy desired the symbol of its sovereign independence and international jurisdiction, the end of the undignified and increasingly unreal breach with Italy, the reinstatement of Catholicism as the privileged State religion. Mussolini wanted the destruction of the only real opposition in Italy, the Catholic Partito Populare; and got it before the treaties were signed. Pius XI, a reactionary in politics, had no liking for the democratic Catholicism which sought to translate the Christian ethic into political life, and sacrificed it without regret. It is notable that Don Sturzo, its exiled leader, is the only man of whom Professor Binchy writes with unqualified admiration. Mussolini also wanted to establish Fascist control over the Church in Italy, and to identify Fascism and Catholicism in the eyes of Catholics throughout the world. His success in this last object is patent in the intellectual contortions of Catholics in defending policies like the Abyssinian war, flat violations of every Christian principle. It was upon the second aim, however, the Fascising of the Italian Church, that controversy arose before the ink on the treaties was dry. The fundamental problems are brilliantly described in the chapter called "Incompatibilities," and then the gathering clouds which turned the *Ora di Luce*, so gladly welcomed, into a day of storms. True, Catholicism was established as the State Church, its matrimonial sacrament encouraged, and its position freed from numerous drawbacks. True, the crucifix and religious education were reintroduced in the schools. But those lessons were overwhelmingly outweighed by the "statolatry" impressed in every lesson by the Fascist teachers. The partial suppression of the Catholic Boy Scouts was decreed before 1929 and only forestalled by their dissolution by the Pope; in the end they were absorbed by the Balilla. Catholic Action was deprived of its lay and self-governing character, robbed of sport and all its attractive activities, and reduced to a purely priest-run guild. It was the war against Catholic Action which stirred the Pope to the impassioned Encyclical *Non Abbiamo Bisogno*. Later he protested [illegible]nly against the racialist decrees.

Grav[illegible]l, the "nihil obstat" of the State, exercis[illegible] appointments to all but the Roman bishopric[illegible], and the veto of prefects upon lesser Church appointments, ensures that no priest opposed to Fascism can obtain a cure. The result was the paralysis of the Church in the violent persecution of the religion of the Catholic non-Italian minorities, the Tyrolese and Slovenes. It also accounts in part for the increasing nationalism of the Italian Church, of which the extreme Fascism of Padre Gemelli, the Rector of the Catholic University of Milan, and of the Cardinal Archbishop of Milan are symptomatic.

Two conclusions emerge: first, that the Fascist regime will not tolerate any Catholic influence upon those "mixed matters" of public morality where the Church has always claimed the higher jurisdiction; second, that the Italian Church is in danger of becoming more Italian than Catholic, and more reactionary than Christian. This is bound to affect the Vatican itself, insulated though it partly is by the independence of the Curia cardinals. Professor Binchy's personal remedy would be the appointment of a greater proportion of non-Italians in the Curia itself; but this is, practically speaking, most improbable. In sum, the undoubted gains of the concordatory régime are balanced by losses which must concern all who hold the Church as a defence against the rising faith in violence and State power.

FREDA WHITE

ENGLISH CUSTOMS

English Custom and Usage. By CHRISTINA HOLE. *Batsford.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Personal superstitions increase during wartime, and local customs decline. This is because personal superstitions are portable, exchangeable, and supply a psychological need, whilst local survival customs usually do not do this, and when for a few years they have been allowed to go downhill, are too self-conscious to revive spontaneously. Salt-spilling remains bad luck, but dressing of wells ceases to be a virtue: Your Birthday is still worth sixpennyworth of prediction, but the peculiar birthday celebrations of your local saint tend to recede out of practice and into the guide-book.

In detail, therefore, some of the customs in Miss Hole's book, although she follows them up to 1940, are already out of date. The black-out has put an end to Midsummer Eve bonfires or the proper celebration of November 5th; oranges and lemons will presumably lack profusion even at St. Clement's; the hard-boiled peace-eggs of the nineteenth century, which became chocolate Easter eggs in the twentieth (if not cardboard extravagances holding anything from cameras to chorus-girls), will be rare as other eggs: turkeys are back with the Boar's Head. These are major institutions and may return. But lesser and local occasions probably will not, unless interested parties decide to revive them as they have tried to resuscitate St. Valentine into a patron saint for stationers, or make Plough Monday an excuse for the effusions of agricultural politics. The true unself-conscious customs—first-footing, shroving, rush-bearing, mumming—are threatened. Many of them, except those arbitrarily selected for press and film publicity (ah, that annual hock-tide kissing at Hungerford on the Easter week news-reels!) will go. But many will survive, even in a community scrambled by war, evacuation, and easy transport. And new customs and occasions—Trafalgar days, Oak Apple days, or Anzac days—grow up in generation to take their place.

Miss Hole does not concern herself particularly in this book with problems of this sort, although she apparently approves artificial revivals. Nor does she try to relate customs and usages to various cultures: still less tries to underline the sociological implications of what customs survive and what do not. She has instead, and perhaps wisely, confined herself to a straightforward rehearsal of a wide number of customs, often grouped under the times of the main Christian festivals. She properly shows the pagan background, without analysing it. She also, and equally properly, emphasises country customs, which usually have a cultural origin, rather than the mere ceremonial of City companies, or the ritual of family tradition. She prefers the romantic survival to the anomaly enthroned by law. Altogether, without any particular pretensions to scholarship, she has produced an extremely interesting list of local, and sometimes general, survivals of early English social behaviour. Living within fifty miles of Painswick, for example, I still had never heard of the September feast there, and the baking of "puppy-dog pie." I hope it is still eaten, and that those authorities are right who derive the custom from the sacrifice of young dogs at the Roman lupercalia once held at the near-by Roman settlement. Un-English, of course, but then we have substituted china dogs and almond paste, and no one hits women publicly with thongs of goat-skin.

It is a useful collection, and so are the illustrations, particularly the contemporary photographs. I forgo a tilt at the blurb.

PENNETHORNE HUGHES

OUR BUREAUCRATS

The Higher Civil Service of Great Britain. By H. E. DALE. *Oxford University Press.* 10*s.*

There are nearly half a million Civil Servants, in time of peace; but, Mr. Dale's book deals with fewer than six hundred of this number. The "higher" Civil Service of which he writes consists of the permanent administrators at the very top of the various public departments, together with a small group of lawyers and other professional men holding high specialist positions. This exalted minority, as it was composed just before the outbreak of the war, did not include a single woman. It was drawn mainly from Oxford and Cambridge, with a smaller infusion from other Universities. It included a high proportion of "old school ties," mainly from middle rather than upper-class public schools. Most of its members belonged to one or another of a very small group of West End Clubs, where they lunched regularly and exchanged views and gossip—especially Service gossip. These men, despite differences of social origin—for they included representatives of nearly every grade of the middle class—were largely homogeneous in social habits and general outlook; for by the time they had risen high enough to be included in Mr. Dale's list they had mostly acquired a large overlay of common characteristics. These were the men who administered Great Britain, even if they did not govern it; and Mr. Dale, writing just before the outbreak of war, seemed fairly certain that they could go on administering Great Britain, and even that certain deviations from type, resulting from the last war, would not persist. One wonders whether he thinks so still, now that a new mass of "temporaries" has come in to help his six hundred in meeting the abnormal demands of war.

Mr. Dale has been himself a "higher" Civil Servant, and writes with the knowledge of the intelligent "insider." He criticises his former colleagues as one who loves them; and the reader is sometimes left wondering whether he

realises how devastating some of his criticisms are. What comes out again and again is that the whole process of selection and of training after a man has entered the Service produces side by side with strict honesty and conscientiousness in the exact performance of duties, a spirit of unadventurous routine, of evasion of all responsibility that can be evaded without dishonour, and of devotion to precedent and to the observance of hierarchical order. To some extent these are qualities unavoidable in a large administrative machine which is continually subject to public scrutiny, and liable to be shot at in press or Parliament. But Mr. Dale's description leaves his readers in no doubt that they are pressed beyond what is necessary, or that there is a tendency for them to become more marked, partly because the complexities of administration increase, and partly because the Civil Service becomes more middle-class, and has less in common socially with Ministers than it had of old. For Ministers have ceased to be socially homogeneous; and the modern Civil Servant is not as a rule "friends" socially with his Minister, whether he be an aristocrat or a Trade Unionist—and less so, of course, with Ministers of the latter type.

Mr. Dale's book is repetitive and slow-moving. But it is candid, within the author's lights; and it deserves to be read by everyone who is thinking seriously about this country's future. For, if there is one thing certain, it is that the body of men whom Mr. Dale describes, however well fitted to administer a static social system, are entirely unfitted to ride the whirlwind of rapid social and economic change. A new Britain will need a new "higher" Civil Service; and it seems pretty clear that the existing "higher" Civil Service, while avoiding all taint of "political bias," will be quietly doing its damnedest to keep the old Britain where it is. G. D. H. COLE

MAN SURVEYED

Diagnosis of Man. By KENNETH WALKER. *Cape.* 10s. 6d.

First, let me acknowledge this for what it is, a serious and important book. It has keenness of vision and breadth of outlook; it shows much reading and considerable scholarship; it is inspired by a high ambition, and it is well and attractively written. In short, a very gallant effort.

Mr. Walker sets out to give a complete account of man. A well-known surgeon, he is in revolt against the mechanistic conceptions that have hitherto dominated the theory of his science and the practice of his art. The surgeon's picture of the body is true, he thinks, so far as it goes, but it does not go very far. It leaves out too much: the mind, which affects the body; the unconscious, which affects the conscious mind; the real self, whose intimations of the existence of another order of reality reach us in religion. Hence the desire to compile an "all-in" catalogue of man from which nothing has been omitted. What are its items? There is the body, made of living cells; there are the nervous system, the brain and the ductless glands, which so mysteriously affect the temperament. Each receives a chapter to itself. There is medical psychology and the new insight which it has given us into the psychological causation of disease. All these belong to the province of the sciences which reach their results by taking a man to bits and seeing what he is made of, but have nothing to say "concerning the higher potentialities of man or his spiritual longings." For these we must turn to philosophy and religion, more particularly to Hindu philosophy and religion. There follow accounts of Buddhism, of the practitioners of Yoga and of the Christian mystics, including a first-rate discussion of the efficiency of the mystics' methods and the validity of their results. In sum, then, a gallant effort to present a synoptic view of man.

I wish I could think that it was more successful. Let me indicate some of the reasons which militate against success. Setting his face against departmentalism, Mr. Walker has, nevertheless, succeeded in presenting us only with a series of departmentalised accounts: the physiologist's, the psychologist's and the mystic's. These do not cohere; they do not even supplement one another; on the contrary, they remain irreconcilably diverse, and in some respects contradict one another. Thus, if the scientific account of man is true, he is, as Mr. Walker rightly says, "an automaton, every action of which is predetermined by his mechanism."

Now Mr. Walker does not, of course, mean that our behaviour is determined. His teachers are not the scientists but the mystics, and, forced to choose, he would cleave to the latter, holding with them "that reality is the Supreme Self," that "the world has no independent existence apart from this," that the true self of the individual is part of, or rather one with, the Supreme Self, and that when the true self is realised the "differentiations" that the discursive intellect "has made disappear." I say that this is Mr. Walker's real view because, in his last chapter, we find him exhorting us to live in a certain way, so that we can see more, do more, and become more; seeing more, we shall see the world as a unity, the changing show of diverse facts upon which our minds feed, as illusory, and our true selves as aspects of the unity. For one who takes this view, the path of right living, which is also the path of right knowing, is inevitably away from the life of the body and away, therefore, from the conclusions of science:

> "Moved by the mechanism of the body and under the lure of our so-called individuality, we live out the tiny span of our lives amid a turmoil of multiplicity and contradiction."

Quite so; but if so, what becomes of the conclusions of science? To what do they refer, and what sort of truth is it that belongs to them? There can be only one answer: the scientific account of man is not true, and the man to whom it applies is not real. As Mr. Walker himself tells us, "Discursive thinking, however extended, can never lead to the apprehension of reality." Mr. Walker tries to meet the difficulty by a division within the self on Kantian lines—a division supported, as he is careful to point out, by the teaching of Vedanta philosophy. There is empirical man, studied by science, living in time and space, tied to the body and determined by it; there is also the true man, who is free morally and spiritually, and who functions at a higher level of consciousness.

But this division will not do. It will not do first, because if the distinction is valid, we shall have to rule out the conclusions of Mr. Walker's book as invalid, for the conclusions of the book are reached by Mr. Walker's discursive intellect, the same intellect which experiments, researches and reasons when Mr. Walker is following the path of science. Now this intellect belongs to Mr. Walker's empirical self; it is the intellect which makes the differentiation that on a truer view disappears. Above all, it is, if science is right, a determined intellect; its conclusions are not, that is to say, reached by a dispassionate survey of the evidence and the universe; they are conditioned by the workings of Mr. Walker's nerves, glands and brain, of which they are the determined psychological correlates.

It will not do, secondly, because Mr. Walker does not believe that the empirical self *is* wholly determined. He rejects behaviourism even as an account of the empirical self, and believes that thought, even the discursive thought of the intellect, may be free. Mr. Walker does not seem

MARTINS BANK
LIMITED

Chairman: FREDERIC A. BATES, M.C., A.F.C., D.L.
Deputy-Chairmen: RT. HON. LORD COLWYN, P.C., D.L., LL.D.
R. M. HOLLAND-MARTIN, C.B., A. HAROLD BIBBY, D.S.O., D.L.
Director and Chief General Manager: J. M. FURNISS.

Statement of Accounts
31st December, 1941

LIABILITIES:

Capital paid up	£4,160,042
Reserve Fund	3,600,000
Current, Deposit and other accounts (including Profit and Loss Account)	158,152,405
Liability for Acceptances, Endorsements, etc.	9,610,580
	£175,523,027

ASSETS:

Cash in hand and at Bank of England	£17,621,389
Balances with, and cheques in course of collection on, other British Banks	4,386,068
Money at call and short notice	8,475,000
Balances with Banks abroad	41,772
Treasury Bills	7,660,000
Treasury Deposit Receipts	28,000,000
Bills Discounted	167,029
Investments	59,108,585
Advances to Customers and other accounts	37,585,780
Bank Premises	2,866,814
Liability of Customers for Acceptances, Endorsements, etc.	9,610,580
	£175,523,027

LONDON DISTRICT HEAD OFFICE: 68 LOMBARD STREET, E.C.3
HEAD OFFICE: WATER STREET, LIVERPOOL, 2

BARCLAYS BANK
LIMITED

EDWIN FISHER, Chairman.
WILLIAM MACNAMARA GOODENOUGH, Deputy Chairman.
HUGH EXTON SEEBOHM, Vice-Chairman.
General Managers: A. W. TUKE, N. S. JONES, F. C. ELLERTON.

Statement of Accounts
31st December, 1941

LIABILITIES

	£	£
Current, Deposit and other Accounts, including Reserve for Taxation and Contingencies and Balance of Profit and Loss	629,650,012	
Balances in account with Subsidiary Banks	15,535,385	
		645,185,397
Acceptances and Endorsements, etc., for account of Customers		12,872,411
Paid-up Capital		15,858,217
Reserve Fund		11,250,000

ASSETS

Cash in Hand and with the Bank of England		70,617,711
Balances with other British Banks and Cheques in course of collection		27,815,694
Money at Call and Short Notice		24,917,550
Bills Discounted		40,343,427
Treasury Deposit Receipts		152,000,000
Investments		168,219,936
Investments in Subsidiary Banks (at cost, less amounts written off):—		
The British Linen Bank—£1,241,044 12s. 6d. Stock		3,723,134
Other Banks—(including fully paid Stock and 500,000 "B" Shares of £5 each £1 per Share paid up, in Barclays Bank (Dominion, Colonial and Overseas) and 1,000,000 Shares of £1 each, 5s. per Share paid up, in Barclays Bank (France) Limited)		2,484,010
Advances:—Customers and other Accounts	173,321,065	
Balances in account with Subsidiary Banks	913,412	
		174,234,477
Liability of Customers for Acceptances and Endorsements, etc.		12,872,411
Bank Premises and Adjoining Properties (at cost, less amounts written off)		7,937,665

Head Office: 54, LOMBARD STREET, LONDON, E.C.3

to appreciate these difficulties in his diagnosis, which tends to leave the two selves side by side without integration, just as the two accounts, the religio-philosophical and the scientific, are left side by side without synthesis. Seeking to take a synoptic view of man, Mr. Walker, I am afraid, only succeeds in presenting us with a new series of departmentalised accounts.

C. E. M. JOAD

Week-end Competitions

No. 625

Set by Fred Oyster

We offer the usual prizes for the best ballad (not exceeding 20 lines) of Famous Murderers.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, February 2.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 622

Set by Audrey Hilton

The usual prizes are offered for the best original mnemonic verses of not more than 16 lines for use in 1942, upon such subjects as; the names of the Cabinet Ministers, the towns of Libya, the usage of a Tommy gun, clothes ration values, your local trains or telephone numbers. Competitors are free to choose their own subject or to use any of the above.

Report from Audrey Hilton

The speaking encyclopaedia audible on the radio of a Sunday afternoon threw off the other day, amid the general shower of ideas, the admission that when he wanted to remember something he constructed a "frame" to put it in. For most people the easiest sort of frame is a verse, ranging from the society columnist's "Put an Earl before a Duke, You will get a stern rebuke; A Bishop is a Lord as well, With the Barons he must dwell," to the nonsensical jingles that helped us through Latin and Greek.

It is clear from the entries that some competitors are far too clever to need mnemonics at all—their verses would be more difficult to remember than the facts they contain. Towanbucket's "Standard Time the World Over" is so magnificent and so competent that it gets a second prize. But I wonder whether you would use this when making your overseas 'phone call? Into this category of brilliance comes William Bliss with his "Libyan Towns"—a marvel of intricacy. R. S. Jaffray and W. E. B. Henderson have also teased their (and my) wits too much. It is an easy jingle which has popularised rhymes like "Thirty days hath September," and the difficulty seems to have been in producing the right traditional feeling, like the quality of a well-worn netsuke.

E. W. Fordham's "Clothes Coupons" had a gleeful last verse: "A petticoat's 4, A jumper 2 more, While leggings and gaiters and spats Take 3 of the best; 4 get you a vest, But nothing is needed for hats, We may all buy unlimited hats." D.D.R., with his "Shakespeare's Historical Plays," tried to fill a long-felt want, and of the straightforward ones William Henry Clark was explicit about food rations, though he couldn't resist an unnecessary postscript, which, however, I quote for its entertainment value: "But damn the lot if you've got the wits To use your Loaf and eat at the Ritz."

Stanley J. Sharpless sent in a new edition of the "L & — R Timetable. . . . It's Laconic. . . . It's Euphonic. . . . It's Mnemonic. . . . 8.34. Crammed to the door. 8.39. Running it fine. 8.48. Sure to be late. 8.52. Lord, no. Taboo," which is much more the kind of thing needed. Think of Kipling's Mother Jaguar, on the difference between a hedgehog and a tortoise: "Can't curl, but can swim—Slow-solid, that's him! Curls up, but can't swim—Stickly-prickly that's him!"

I recommend Hassall Pitman for a First Prize of one guinea (though I suspect I am being bribed by the charming drawing) and suggest that E. W. Fordham should receive, with Towanbucket, a Second Prize of 15*s.* 9*d.*, for his valiant handling of a difficult team.

FIRST PRIZE

26 for Reach-me-downs
What I wear on Sundays
11 for me daughter's gowns
4 for her undies.
6 for blinkin' dungarees
5 for corded trouses
4 for mother's best chemise
5 for her blouses.
7 for me bloomin' boots
8 for Lucy's school frocks
17 for Tommy's suits
3 for me wool socks.
7 for the old girl's skirts
4 for combinations
8 for me working shirts—
And POP goes the rations!
(To be sung to the tune of "Pop goes the weasel.")

HASSALL PITMAN

SECOND PRIZE

I

Twelve noon at Greenwich is the same at Brussels and Gibraltar;
And Lisbon, Paris and Madrid, their clocks don't need to alter;
At Amsterdam it's twenty past, but Budapest and Berne,
With Stockholm, Copenhagen, Oslo, Warsaw, Rome, Lucerne,
Are striking one; while far away, if calendars are true,
Helsinki, Moscow, Athens bells are gaily ringing two
(Plus Cairo, Capetown, Stamboul—if it's all the same to you);
The tired babus are yawning at 5.30 in Bombay,
And eight o'clock in Peking ends another working day;
It's nine p.m. in Tokyo, nine-thirty, Adelaide,
While at ten p.m. in Sydney they're preparing for a raid;
The Golden Gate is sleeping sound (Vancouver, too) at four;
Chicago dreams at six a.m., at seven, Singapore
(With Montreal, Quebec, New York, and half-a-dozen more);
And in Rio de Janeiro, where the hour hand points to nine,
They have heard for many minutes now the cry:
Arise and shine! TOWANBUCKET

II

These are the jobs we are paying them for—
Ships, Alexander; Margesson, war;
Simon and Kingsley Wood—law and the money-bag:
Moyne and R. Hudson—Colonies, Fish and Ag.:
Eden and Morrison—Foreign and Home Affairs:
Bevin and Ernie Brown—Labour and Health repairs:
Butler to run the schools; Sinclair for pinions:
Duncan at Board of Trade; Cranborne, Dominions:
Amery's India; Attlee's Privy Seal:
Johnston has Scotland, and Leathers the wheel
Of Transport, while Anderson, known as Sir John,
Presides at the Council—whenever it's on:
Then for Supply, with his push and his eager look
Need I remind you of brisk little Beaverbrook?
Who is Prime Minister? If you should ask it,
The answer is Winston—the pick of the basket.

E. W. FORDHAM

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Company Meeting

BARCLAYS BANK

AN EVENTFUL YEAR

THE following is an extract from the statement by the chairman, Mr. Edwin Fisher, on the report and accounts for the year ended December 31st, 1941, to be submitted at the forty-seventh ordinary general meeting of Barclays Bank Limited, to be held in London on January 26th.

The balance sheet as at December 31st, 1941, reflects, as is only natural, the influence on financial conditions of the intensified war effort of the country, which has been so marked during the past 12 months. The year was notable for a great increase in our Current Deposit and Other Accounts, and for a marked rise in the amounts lent to the Government in the form of Treasury Deposit Receipts and longer-term British Government Securities. There has been, however, a heavy decrease in our total of Bills Discounted and a further falling off in our Advances to Customers. We have had to solve many staff problems connected with the calling-up of our men for service with the Forces and to deal with the difficulties occasioned by damage to our premises from enemy action. The country has experienced a great decrease in enemy bombing for several months, but certain of our branches sustained damage in air raids during the year. Where this happened, the interruption to the smooth conduct of business was reduced to a minimum and the special arrangements made were again found to work with smoothness and efficiency.

It would be idle to pretend that the rise in our Deposits has not helped our earning power, but the extent to which we have benefited should not be allowed to get out of true perspective, for when we come to examine the increased cost of administration, the special war-time expenditure and the heavier taxation, it is perhaps not surprising that there has been a diminution in the Net Profit.

By heavy taxation of income, by the drive for new savings, by rationing and by price control, the Government has been able to keep in check the dangers of inflation. No small part of this success has been due to the energy and leadership of those directing the National Savings Movement. We must, however, at all times be alive to the possibilities of inflation, which are ever-present, and in this connection one has only to look at the high level of Banking Deposits and at the mounting total of the Note Circulation. The rise in the Note Circulation is no doubt very largely due to higher amounts paid out in wages to individual workers and to the great increase in the numbers of people employed. Part at least of the increase may represent additional money in the pockets of the people, which would be better employed if invested in National Savings Certificates or some other Government Security. We, as citizens, should continue to give every support to the Government by providing funds, through savings, to equip the fighting Forces with the weapons they need, and our efforts in this direction, coupled with the other measures which the Government has taken, should enable this country to emerge from the war without having to face the very serious difficulties which inflation on a large scale would bring in its train.

The net profit of the bank for the year ended December 31st last amounted to £1,353,302, which compares with £1,525,665 for the year 1940. The directors recommend the payment of final dividends of 5 per cent., making 10 per cent. for the year on the "A" shares, and 7 per cent., making 14 per cent. for the year, on the "B" and "C" shares, less income tax. I hope shareholders will feel satisfied with the results, having in view the increased taxation.

In the eventful year through which we have just passed, there have been difficulties to face and new problems to be solved in the conduct of our business. That the difficulties have been surmounted successfully and the problems overcome speaks volumes for the energy and loyalty of the staff, men and women, permanent and temporary, for it is on them that the day-to-day burden has rested, but no tribute would be complete without a special acknowledgment of the part played by the General Managers and all those others associated with them in the administration.

Company Meeting

MIDLAND BANK LTD.

Statement by THE RIGHT HON. R. McKENNA

INSTEAD of delivering a speech at the annual meeting of shareholders to be held on January 29th, 1942, the Chairman has prepared a statement, extracts from which appear below.

The net profit for the year is slightly higher than for 1940, the large increase in the amount payable for income tax and national defence contribution having been more than counterbalanced by the expansion of our business and the smaller provision required for bad and doubtful debts.

Anyone whose memory is long enough must have been struck by the differences between the internal financial measures adopted in the two great wars. Most evident is the more extensive and more active official control over financial operations: the capital market is rigidly reserved for Government borrowings and a few other approved issues; foreign exchange transactions are regulated in the utmost detail; the Government itself provides direct finance for a large volume of essential war production, and lays down the general lines the banks should follow in making advances to their customers. Added to this is a more definite and explicit monetary policy. Here, as in the controls just mentioned, the closest co-operation has come to be maintained as a matter of course between the Treasury and the Bank of England and between the central bank and the commercial banks.

ADVANTAGES GAINED

While we must not overlook the influence of other measures of control, the methods adopted for financing the war have helped to minimise inflation. Indeed, notwithstanding the growth in the volume of money and the upward course of prices, it may properly be concluded that there has been little inflation so far, the rise in prices being attributable to non-monetary causes which it would have been almost impossible to offset by monetary means. In any event, the rise in the cost of living index number to date has been much less marked than in the corresponding period of the last war, notwithstanding the purchase tax.

The experience gained in the past ten years in currency policy has contributed materially to this advance, which has carried us a long way on the road from a supposedly self-regulating system to one of continuous management. We have only to look at the results in order to see how great has been the improvement upon the methods practised in the last war. Although this time again a huge creation of national debt has been inevitable, the proportion of Government expenditure which has been covered in that way is smaller, and the current rate of charge falling on the Exchequer vastly reduced. Moreover, the instrument of taxation has been used more with the conscious purpose of diverting to the Government a large part of the purchasing power which, if left in private hands, might be used to bid against the Government for limited supplies of goods and services. Another means towards the same end has been the device of "compulsory saving," which defers purchasing power until a time after the war when it may perform a valuable economic and social function.

POST-WAR PERILS

So far, then, the record is satisfactory; but we must not forget that there may be many post-war perils ahead of us. Last time the worst excesses of overspending, inflation, speculation and capital expansion came not during, but shortly after, the war, with disastrous consequences that are still remembered. The risk of a similar catastrophe after this war may be all the greater in that restrictions have been more severe. Accordingly, there should be no hasty abandonment of necessary controls in finance, particularly of the capital market and of foreign exchange transactions. We must profit by experience in using to the full the essential driving force of individual enterprise in the post-war conditions, the general shape of which experience may help us to foresee. If we are wise in our perception of the proper limits within which freedom and control should respectively operate, a financial system can be evolved which will be a powerful factor in the creation and maintenance of national well-being.

Company Meeting

WESTMINSTER BANK LIMITED

THE following are extracts from the statement of the Chairman, The Hon. Rupert E. Beckett, which has been circulated to Shareholders.

Following the procedure which was adopted last year, it is my intention to give, in the form of this printed statement, the information upon the year's accounts to which the attention of Shareholders should be particularly directed. The proceedings at the meeting will therefore be confined to the submission of the customary Resolutions to the shareholders present and to any discussion arising thereon.

Throughout the past year there has been an acceleration of the extraordinary war expenditure of the nation, and necessarily, therefore, an increase in banking resources. The payment out of the Exchequer for the past twelve months to the end of December last was £4,654 millions, and if we add to that the £4,011 millions expended for the 16 months to the end of 1940, we arrive at the colossal figure of £8,665 millions to the end of 1941. It is of interest to note, by way of comparison, that the total Votes of Credit for the last war, inclusive of considerable loans to the Dominions and Allies, was approximately £8,400 millions.

INCREASE IN DEPOSITS

As a corollary to such expenditure there was an increase in the deposit liabilities of the Clearing Banks, during the year to November last, of no less than £507 millions, compared with an increase of £437 millions for the previous 15 months. There are indications that a liberal use will be made of the new Tax Reserve Certificates. If so, then the growth of bank deposits will be correspondingly slowed down.

The main interest-bearing assets, namely, Advances and Investments, which respectively exhibit ratios of 24.84 per cent. and 31.67 per cent. to deposit liabilities have, during the year, changed places for the first time in banking history in their order of precedence. The rise in investments, common to the Clearing Bankers, has been perhaps the most interesting banking change during the year. The increased resources obtained from an increase of £60 millions in Deposits, together with a reduction of £18 millions in Advances, viz., £78 millions in all, have found employment in a net increase in the liquidity resources of £42 millions and an increase in Investments of £36 millions.

The ratio of liquidity items to total deposit liabilities has grown progressively over the past four years as follows: 1938, 32.22 per cent.; 1939, 36.33 per cent.; 1940, 43.16 per cent.; 1941, 46.61 per cent. The corresponding reduction in the ratio of the two main earning assets of Advances and Investments has of necessity affected adversely our Profit and Loss Account; the change in our banking structure brought about by this alteration in distribution of assets has an important bearing upon the earning power of the Bank. Net earnings are also adversely affected by material increases in costs and by increases in the rate of Income Tax and by National Defence Contribution.

NET PROFIT AND DIVIDEND

After providing for Rebate and Taxation, and appropriations to the credit of Contingency Accounts (out of which full provision for Bad and Doubtful Debts has been made), the net Profit for the past year amounts to £1,189,696—a shrinkage of £120,933 as compared with last year's figure. Your Directors have been enabled to declare dividends at the same rate as last year, viz., 18 per cent. on the £4 shares (£1 paid) and the maximum of 12½ per cent. on the £1 shares (fully paid), while making the allocations, customary in recent years, of £300,000 to Officers' Pension Fund and £100,000 in reduction of the Bank Premises Account, at the same time recording a small increase of £12,734 in the carry forward to £563,863.

Our auxiliary, Westminster Foreign Bank Limited, has all its trading branches in Belgium and in France (in enemy or deemed enemy occupied territory).

The figures for our affiliate, the Ulster Bank Limited, show a profit for this year of £132,494, as against £134,616 for the previous year.